# Valley Voice

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## Lindsay Mulls Sales Tax Hike

**Dave Adalian**

With the city facing a major deficit with no way to cover the gap, the Lindsay City Council is considering a gamble that could see them clear of red ink.

Facing budget shortfalls on the order of $450,000 annually for the foreseeable future, the city has already been forced to send home its workforce two days a month as a cost-saving measure. More cuts to city services, reduced hours and even layoffs could result if some solution is not found, leaving the Council wondering if voters would be willing to approve a citywide sales tax. A more immediate question is whether the Council itself, which has shown signs of division recently, can even agree to make the attempt.

### Time of the Essence

If Lindsay is going to raise sales tax there, the city must act now, Finance Director Tamera Larken told the Council at its meeting, September 8.

"You have to start now, because you really won't reap any benefit until 2017," she said.

Should the council decide to move ahead, the earliest voters could see the proposal will be during the June 2016 primary election. Passage will require a two-thirds majority. If approved, 110 days will lapse before the city could begin collecting the additional revenue on October 1, 2016, and the first payments from the state would not arrive until after the start of the new year.

"This is not an immediate fix," Larken said. "This is a long-range plan. In 2017, your projected deficits are still going to be there."

### Cut to the Bone

Larken said the budget has already been combed for possible cuts, and city hall is looking for ways to increase its income now.

"We are looking at other immediate measures to try and reduce that, increased revenues in other departments that may be requiring a General Fund operating transfer," she said. "There's no way we can cut more than maybe $50,000-$60,000 out of the problem that we have now."

With that impasse, Lindsay finds itself going the way of most of the county's other cities. Only Lindsay, Woodlake and Exeter have yet to enact localized sales-tax increases. Dinuba added an extra 0.75% at the check-out on top of the 8% charged countywide. Visalia added 0.25%, while the Farmersville, Porterville and Tulare tacked on 0.5% at the register.

With that in mind, city staff recommends the Council seek a 0.5% increase should they decide to go ahead with the plan. Even that may not be enough to bridge the gap entirely.

"If you were to increase the tax rate by 0.50, you would realize about $377,805," said Larken. "With the projected deficit for 2015 of $451,000, if you only went with the 0.25, you'd still

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County-owned potable water tanks dot the front yards of many East Porterville homes, as a temporary fix to non-functioning wells due to the drought. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

## Despite County, City Efforts, Drought Yet Plagues East Porterville

**Nancy Vigran**

For most East Porterville residents, more permanent solutions to their water woes cannot come soon enough. However, it may not come very soon, or at least until there is a good amount of rain. For many, their wells have gone dry.

Several homes now rely on potable water deliver to their temporary tanks for showers and laundry. Drinking and cooking water is delivered separately. Others are waiting for their tanks to be installed. Some residents have moved out; their homes now empty and boarded up or simply left open.

But some still have some water coming up from their wells. Luis Ramos, his parents and brothers, who live on S. Maurer Street, are one such family.

"We have a little water," Ramos said, enough for a shower and to flush the toilet.

But, "it stinks," he said.

Their yard has no grass, a large older tree and few shrubs which they nurse along, that remain green.

The potable water tanks for many of the homes are provided through grant funds and managed by Tulare County, whose staff has arranged for regular water deliveries.

The potable water source, located to the west of Porterville in Jones Corner, also known as Village Gardens, has many residents there unhappy with the constant water truck traffic in their area causing what they deem as a potential hazard to their children and wear-and-tear to their already pot-holed roadways. They also have concerns for their local well, which is actually owned by the City of Porterville, but provides water to those living in that unincorporated area.

### New Well Being Drilled

A permanent solution is on the way, but will not help with the immediate crisis.

The county and City of Porterville are working on an agreement. Although not signed, or even finalized, the county has moved forward with drilling a well on the west side of the city, next to the Tule River, not far to the east from Jones Corner. In theory, while the land is currently owned by the county, this well is to become the property of Porterville once the agreement is finalized and signed, and the well is completed and functional. The well is to be hooked up to the city's water system and eventually could aide in providing water to 115 of

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## Cheese Plant Moving Forward

A rendering of the future CaliCheese plant in Tulare.

**Dave Adalian**

A 300,000-square-foot cheese factory finally has the go-ahead for construction in Tulare after clearing a final hurdle in a years-long approval process.

At its August 18 meeting, the Tulare City Council OK'd the sale of a 59-acre plot at the corner of Paige Avenue and Enterprise Street, adjacent to the city waste-water treatment plant. Purchasing the land is CaliCheese Company LLC, which plans to spend $350 million to build a whey and cheese-making facility that will eventually employ more than 200 people full-time to process four million pounds of milk a day. The company will pay $2.09 million for the site.

### Neighbors Raised Concerns

But it wasn't the city's final nod that CaliCheese needed before going ahead. First, it had to appease its future neighbors in the nearby unincorporated community of the Matheny Tract, who raised objections to the project because of its lack of an environmental impact report.

At one time, the site at 2900 W. Paige Avenue was slated for construction of a meat-processing plant, but that

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## Tulare Man's Problems With Law Enforcement Continue

**Catherine Doe**

Life hasn't settled down for Jonathan Smith, or his father Michael Koonce, since Smith's arrest and alleged beating by the Tulare Police Department on August 25. On that morning, Smith had an altercation with the Tulare Police Department in the parking lot of Feltech Auto Repair. According to Smith and a witness, he was pulled out of his car, handcuffed and beaten. The Tulare Police Department has not been able to give their account of what happened because of possible litigation.

"The incident is being reviewed and we have no further comment," said Tulare Police Lieutenant Greg Merrill.

On September 10, Merrill came by Smith's home to have him sign documents. Merrill described the documents to Smith as release forms so Smith could go by the police department and pick up his phones, Smith said.

Smith's two cell phones were confiscated from him the day of his arrest. Smith told Merrill that he couldn't sign papers unless his lawyers, John Sarsfield and Maggie Melo, had a chance to review them. According to Koonce, Merrill responded by saying he did not want to talk to attorneys.

During the confrontation with the Tulare Police Department on August 25, Smith recorded the incident on his

**PROBLEMS** continued on **12 »**

# Ombudsman Workshop: How does the program work?

The community is invited to attend this free workshop and learn more about the federally mandated program that emphasizes dignity and determination in its efforts to improve the quality of life for residents in long term care facilities.

**THIS WORKSHOP MEETS:**

**Wednesday, September 30**
**10:30 to 11:30 AM**

**4520 W. Cypress Avenue in Visalia**

**For more information, call (559) 512-6480**

Quail Park of Visalia

*A Senior Lifestyle Community*

**5050 W. Tulare Avenue in Visalia, California**
**(559) 512-6480**
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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

## Shame!

In its September 3 edition, the *Valley Voice* ran a front page article about a Tulare man who claimed to have been roughed-up by some officers of that city's police department. Ideally, the truth of this incident will begin to emerge with the defendant's first hearing, which is scheduled for the 24th of this month.

As publisher, let me be the first to admit that we did not, in fact, contact the Tulare Police Department for their side of the story. The reason is simple: We got the story from the law offices of the defendant's attorney, and made the assumption that--as the case was in progress--the TPD would refuse to speak with us. I apologize for this journalistic shortcoming, and we shall rectify it by contacting them every time there is an update to the story.

That being said, I must take this opportunity to pour the hot tar of shame over those who, in social media, saw fit to support the notion that, if it is true the defendant was roughed-up, this is in any way excusable. Or justified. Or that there might be mitigating circumstances. It's bad enough that these lesser elements resorted to bullying and sarcasm online to bolster their sorry viewpoint. One would expect nothing else from a lower-echelon--let's say defective--human being. But the bottom line is they're wrong. These are the type of people who probably didn't balk at the idea of torture under the Bush Administration. And I pity them.

There is no excuse--short of bad training, poor hiring practices or physical attack--for any policeman, anywhere, to ever rough-up an unarmed citizen. Period.

Yes--of course!--it's entirely possible that the defendant was any manner of the things he was accused of being in social media. But none of those things are germane. I offer into evidence: His bruised face.

Let's visit the department's mission statement:

*The mission of the Tulare Police Department is to provide for its citizens the safest and most secure community as possible; to be a strong and effective organization through open communications, teamwork, mutual respect, and a partnership with the community; willing to pioneer innovative approaches to law enforcement, while at the same time promoting a high degree of professionalism and respect for human dignity.*

*Jerry Breckinridge*
*Chief of Police*
*Tulare Police Department*

Ideally, the defendant's confiscated phone recording and the officers' recordings of the incident will become public. We'll see.

In the meantime, I'd like Tulare to be a place I could visit in peace.

Just imagine--because she's hormonal and attitudinal--that our 16-year old daughter mouthed-off at us. Let's say she was surly, unreasonable and snide. Maybe she threw a shoe, or stomped her foot. So I slugged her in the face.

How does this sound to you out there in social media who supported any excuse for the police?

Or let's say I'm an umpire behind the plate. I catch a batter looking at a called third strike, and he vehemently disagrees with me. He chest-butts me. Do I throw him out of the game? Of course not! At least, not before slugging him in the face.

How does this sound to you out there in social media who supported any excuse for the police?

I am not saying that any member of the TPD roughed-up anyone. What I am saying is that, if true, there is no excuse for it. Police training should be sufficient that the public could be brutally offensive, verbally, and it would cause no rise. The police should be prepared to subdue an individual if he is resisting arrest--not beat him into submission.

And I'm not saying, either, that the defendant was resisting arrest. The facts will be brought forth later this month.

But for you police apologists in social media--Shame! Not only are you online bullies, your cowardly mindset perpetuates the idea that violence is acceptable--preferable, even--when more civilized remedies are available. Your venomous blame-the-victim mentality is not only a poison our society must circumvent, but something you conceal your own defectiveness behind.

Heaven help your children. You certainly can't.

*— Joseph Oldenbourg*


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# Political Fix

Catherine Doe

## What Happened To AB954?

The California State Legislature stayed in session until the wee hours of Saturday morning, September 12, wrapping up end of the year legislation on assisted death, climate change, medical marijuana and family leave. The Senate even passed Resolution 39 that instructed Californians to "Dump Trump," but Assembly Bill 954 never saw the light of day.

AB954 was Assemblyman Devon Mathis' signature. It would have helped low-income homeowners whose wells have gone dry to drill new ones. According to the Health and Human Services Agency, more than 1,500 private wells have gone dry in Tulare County, with 1,000 of those in East Porterville. The bill would have appropriated $10 million from the general fund to help homeowners get grants or low-interest loans to drill new wells. Currently, federal and state money is only available for community wells.

In June, AB954 passed the Assembly 60-0, and was sent to the Senate where it was expected to easily pass and land on the governor's desk.

Then politics intervened. The Chair of Appropriations, Senator Ricardo Lara of Bell Gardens, put AB954 in the suspense file. The suspense file is where lawmakers put bills to die. But why would Senator Lara want to kill a bill that had almost unanimous Republican and Democratic support?

According to Assemblyman Mathis, Sen. Lara did not given a reason for his veto of the bill. But others have.

According to an insider familiar with water issues, "bills with this much support coming out of one house do not get killed in such a manner unless the author has insulted, run his mouth, belittled, and/or taken other actions which make the dominant party feel they need to teach a lesson. Killing his flagship bill is a perfect vehicle for just such a lesson." The pundit added, "things like that don't happen to bipartisan bills unless someone pisses someone off."

So what would have gotten the Democrats so angry? One theory is Assemblyman Mathis' aggressive fight against SB277. This bill, popular with most Californians, eliminated the religious exemption for vaccinating school-aged children. Though Assemblyman Mathis is philosophically against forcing parents to vaccinate their kids, he took a zealous stance, holding rallies, sending out press releases and making speeches, against a very important bill to the Democrats. Though a Tea Party-affiliated group rallied hard against the legislation, the bill had only one plausible outcome, making Assemblyman Mathis' fight ill-advised and alienating.

Another possible reason for AB954's Senate demise might be because Assemblyman Mathis took his eye off the ball. It seems his senior staff tried running him for the Republican leadership position in the Assembly and failed miserably.

His staff marketed him as being part of the political millennial generation that would be there for the next 12 years and knew how to modernize the Republican Party, possibly bringing it back into power in California. Sources say he only received a few votes, but what he lost was precious time and clout in dealing with the drought while trying to establish his political legacy.

AB954 is not completely dead. Matt Shupe, Assemblyman Mathis' new communications director, said that the plan is to bring the bill back next January, for the original $20 million for grants and loans for homeowners with dry wells. But the Democrats may resurrect the bill first and claim it as their own. Usurping other lawmakers' bills is a common practice and already happened to Mathis' bill AB956. This bill would have waived any CEQA requirements on projects seeking to recycle water. His bill was killed by the Democrats then folded into a larger piece of legislation, SB88.

## The Crown Jewel

The minute you hear some suit using the drought as a justification for bad management just close your ears because you are about to hear some major baloney. CEMEX lawyers tried to blame the drought on the fact that four homeowners' wells in Lemon Cove went dry right next to their gravel mine, and right next to a huge, brimming lake CEMEX created. Hanford is trying to use the drought as justification to sell off an undeveloped community park because they don't have the water to maintain it. They apparently do have enough water though to supply 100+ new homes that a potential developer would build on the parkland. The Tulare County Supervisors are using the drought to justify killing off Mooney Grove while fields of lush corn stocks gently sway in the wind on three sides of the property.

All of these shenanigans have left the City of Visalia smelling like a rose. Visalia also happens to be ground zero for the drought but has succeeded in maintaining double the amount of parkland per person than Fresno or Hanford. Visalia has an impressive 5.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 people and keeps their schools open year-round for public use, unlike the other two cities. While Riverway Sports Park in Visalia remains green, beautiful and open, the trees in Mooney Grove and Hanford's Hidden Valley Park are dying and the grass is brown.

It's not just the community park situation that makes Visalia look good. It's their accessible city council members, transparency, public safety workers and, dare I say, their newspaper? After reading the latest about the *Salinas Californian* going to three days a week, I felt so lucky to get up every day and read the *Visalia Times-Delta* with my morning cup of coffee. The *Visalia Times-Delta* is good enough to keep its citizens informed and makes enough mistakes to give me and my husband something to complain about. Life doesn't get much better.

Visalia has had incidents of lack of transparency and police brutality, but it seems limited to a few bad apples. On the other hand, working with Hanford, Fresno and the Tulare County Board of Supervisors can be at times like talking to a brick wall.

So, as you read your daily newspaper with your morning coffee, receive a happy wave from Visalia's handsome Chief of Police Jason Salazar, or stroll through one of Visalia's many parks; realize that in other cities, life ain't so sweet.

## Where's the Freak-out?

Remember when the Republican establishment had a major freak-out when Newt Gingrich surged in the polls in 2012? When is that freak-out going to happen over Donald Trump?

Polling god, Nate Silver, has told everyone to just calm down because Mr. Trump is highly unlikely to win the Republican nomination. His reason is that Mr. Trump is too much of a Democrat. Mr. Silver claims that if Mr. Trump ran for the Democratic ticket he would not have to change many of his positions. He may be extremely to the right when it comes to immigration, but he is a former registered Democrat and for universal health care and raising taxes on the rich.

Mr. Silver correctly predicted which candidate would win in every state during the 2012 presidential elections, so people listen when he talks. But I disagree with Mr. Silver. Might Mr. Trump's final demise eventually come because he has insulted every special interest group in the United States? The only group he hasn't insulted is angry middle-aged White men. But this isn't 1789, and unfortunately for Mr. Trump, women and

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# Hanford's Hidden Valley Debate Continues

**Catherine Doe**

At the September 22 Hanford Planning Commission meeting, it will be decided if the undeveloped part of Hidden Valley Park can be designated as surplus under the 2002 General Plan. If the 18.1 acres of Hidden Valley Park is designated as surplus, the City Council can vote to sell the property.

If Hanford citizens think they are seeing déjà vu, that's because they are.

The Planning Commission already voted "no" on August 11 that the 18.1 acres of Hidden Valley Park be designated as surplus. In response, at their meeting on September 1, the city council told the commission to vote again. The city staff said the planning commission did not have the correct numbers of acres of open space when they voted the first time and should reconsider.

Even if the planning commission votes "no" again next week, the city council has the final word. The city council can still deem the property as surplus and put the undeveloped part of Hidden Valley on the auction block. According to Hanford Environmental Action Team's (HEAT) lawyer, Richard Harriman, a decision to sell could generate lawsuits based on the fact that Hanford's 2002 General Plan is too old to be used to justify anything. In addition, Hanford has a deficit of parkland.

Harriman wrote in a letter to the planning commission saying, "your Commission should reject the proposed findings (of the city staff) and recommend that any sale of the subject property not occur until *after* the current General Plan Update and Final Environmental Impact Report for it has been completed, circulated, approved, and adopted by the City Council."

Even if the city council and planning commission decide to heed Mr. Harriman's advice, and drop the issue until after the new General Plan is approved, they can resurrect it soon after. Hanford's General Plan should be completed and approved sometime in 2016.

To add insult to injury, the Hanford Planning Commission and City Council just filled their dance cards with the exact same issue at the end of 2013. In December of that year, the planning commission voted in favor of selling the 18.1 acres of Hidden Valley Park. But at the January 2014 city council public hearing, 21 people spoke against selling the land and none spoke in favor. The city council got the message and dropped the idea, at least for a few months.

How many times the city council can vote on same thing? "As many times as it takes to get what they want," said a member of HEAT who did not want to be named.

The debate continues about whether to sell the property because of an outdated general plan, the drought and disagreement about the number of acres of open space available to Hanford residents. The city staff has calculated a total of 153.79 acres of community parks. That would mean that there are 2.76 acres of open space of parkland per 1,000 people. This number surpasses Hanford's 2002 General Plan goal of 2 acres per 1,000 people. But it is less than the 6.25 acres recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association and cited by the Hanford Parks and Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

Mickey Stoddard, a parks and recreation commissioner and former city recreation supervisor, spoke during public comment at the September 1 City Council meeting. He pointed out that five of the parks listed on the city's staff report to the city council are not open to the public. The Bob Hill Youth Athletic Complex (26.2 acres), SOCOM (40 acres) Softball Complex (32 acres) BMX Track (4.7 acres) and Harris Street Ball Park (4.4 acres) and Hanford Joint use Softball Complex (21) are fenced-in and locked-up. This represents 128.3 acres of "open space." All of the above mentioned parks either require a fee, a membership on a sports team, or both to gain access to the grounds.

Rob Bentley, of the Hidden Valley Completion Team, said that he drove around to these parks on Labor Day and found them all locked-up.

Stoddard said that Freedom (16.66 acres), Centennial (14.11 acres) and Hidden Valley Park (17.96 acres) are the only actual open spaces where Hanford residents do not have to be a member of a sports team or pay a fee. Bentley pointed out that Hanford's neighbor to their east, Visalia, has 5.1 acres of community parks per 1,000 people, none of which are locked. He said, he wondered: If Visalia can maintain 50 parks, why can't Hanford handle six?

### Who Is the Buyer?

Jason Wix, a Hanford Joint Union High School employee, said "We already own the land so why does it keep coming back on the agenda?" He added, "We want to know who is buying it."

Mattos asked for the city to be more transparent. She said that she has seen the APN number for Hidden Valley on the agenda for the closed sessions and wants to know if the city is in negotiations to sell the property.

Darrel Pyle, Hanford City Manager, says there is no buyer. He said that the city cannot legally pursue a buyer until the sale is found to comply with the general plan and the city declares the land surplus. Then, the property must be offered to a public agency such as a school or a hospital.

According to the city staff report "If no agency is interested in the Land or if terms cannot be successfully

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# Political Fix

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Blacks can now vote.

He actually did insult old White men when he attacked Senator John McCain and some of the 2016 presidential candidates. In fact, everyone who criticizes Mr. Trump is automatically labeled an idiot, or stupid, which is less of a reflection on his critics, than a reflection of himself.

Are there other reasons why Mr. Trump will not be able to go the distance? Hmm, let's see. He said it was amateur hour for those who negotiated the Iran deal. Of course he knows more about Iran than the high-level diplomats from England, France, Germany, Russia, China and the European Union foreign policy chief. Mr. Trump criticized the moderators of the first debate for not quizzing him about his policy positions, then refused to answer policy questions during interviews. Mr. Trump has insulted Carly Fiorina's looks and called women fat pigs, dogs and disgusting animals. He has called his fellow Republicans weak and morons and has called Mexicans drug dealers and rapists.

Many people have compared Mr. Trump's bravado to Charlie Sheen's "tiger blood" rant. But Mr. Sheen had an excuse for all the crazy things he said. He was on crack.

What will happen when Mr. Trump actually realizes he is not going to be president? He did sign the pledge not to run on a separate ticket if he loses the Republican nomination, but he signed the pledge with an asterisk next to his name. He won't run as an independent if he is treated fairly, as if the entire country's--no, the world's--future revolved around how one megalomaniac is treated. Life is not fair, buddy--and if you weren't a privileged White guy you might have learned that by now.

Whether he gets the nomination or not, I think I have changed my mind about wanting to see a debate between Hillary Clinton and Ms. Fiorina. I'd rather see a debate between Ms. Clinton and Mr. Trump.

### Now For Some Venting

***The Walking Dead***

The Minnesota dentist, Walter Palmer, broke his silence recently to set the story straight on his killing of Cecil, the famous Zimbabwean lion. It seems he doesn't want any trouble when he goes back to his day job and life as usual, which is something none of the big game he has killed over the years can do. But their lives don't matter.

Dr. Palmer wants to make clear that "If I had known this lion had a name and was important to the country or a study, obviously I wouldn't have taken it."

Notice his choice of word "taken."

There are a few problems with this. First, Dr. Palmer can see well enough to shoot an arrow through the lion's neck but can't see the cumbersome GPS tracking device? Second, if it weren't a known lion that was part of a study then that would make it OK to kill one of God's greatest creatures --for no better reason than it was a Tuesday?

Dr. Palmer also contests the account that the lion wandered for 40 hours injured and dying. He said that the lion only wandered injured for 24 hours and was tracked down the next day and killed with another arrow. So I suggest we shoot Dr. Palmer in the neck with an arrow and let him wander around for a day. Then we could have one of his buddy big game hunters finish him off with an arrow to the head, because according to Dr. Palmer, that would be OK.

***No Vacancy At the Inn***

When Saudi King Salman rented an entire luxury Washington DC hotel for his entourage during a visit with President Obama, one question came to mind--well, several, actually. Why is the European Union expected to take Syrian refugees by the hundreds of thousands while the Arab nations won't take one? Even though they share the same ethnicity, religion and language, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman will not allow them in.

Great minds must think alike because right after I finished writing this blurb I heard renowned author Salman Rushdie say the exact same thing in an interview.

We both pondered the question of why Arab countries don't take care of their brethren. I investigated whether these Arab countries were in good enough financial shape to take in the Syrians refugees. And the richest country in the world popped up as Qatar, which is just a stone's throw away from Syria. Not only are these countries richer, or just as rich as Germany, they are Syria's neighbors.

Right or wrong, Hungary, Poland and the Baltic countries only want Christian refugees. Has everyone forgotten the Srebrenica genocide? It's safe to say they don't like Muslims in some parts of Europe. Besides, would Qatar accept Christian refugees?

# Real Estate

## Declutter, Depersonalize and Beautify Landscaping Before Listing

**Nancy Vigran**

When preparing a house for listing on the market, certain criteria should be met to make the home attractive for potential buyers.

Some people might want to hire a stager, for assistance, in the presentation of their home; others may prefer to do it themselves, or with a little direction from their real estate agent.

"You don't necessarily have to hire a stager," said Jodi Jolly, realtor and office manager for Musgrove Real Estate Group. "But a home should be staged."

Jolly offered some tips in preparing a home, recently shared on the internet:

- Declutter
- Sell/Donate all unwanted items
- Neutralize what you have
- Deep clean
- Repair simple issues within the house – such as a chipped baseboard.
- Fix up the yard

"Most important, for me," she said, "is to declutter and depersonalize, as much as possible."

If there are a lot of things the family wants to keep, put them in storage, she suggested.

Decluttering and depersonalizing is important so that potential buyers can envision their own things in a home, Jolly explained.

Jolly also expressed the importance of keeping a minimal amount of pet evidence in view and assuring that a home is free from pet odors.

Jolly also feels that a home can show well when vacant, although a few things could be placed in the kitchen and bath including a plant, a pretty towel and maybe a clean small appliance.

Larger and more expensive homes may require more staging with minimal amounts of furniture, she said. It should not look completely empty, but open.

One of the first things many realtors will express is curb appeal. A house must look attractive and inviting when potential buyers pull up. This may not seem easy to do during the current minimal amount of water permitted in most areas, but in fact, it can be done well said Brent Main, owner of Mid-Valley Trees.

"Drought-tolerant plants are most definitely popular right now, but you don't want to take it the extreme either," he said.

Some of these plants may not do well should an abundance of rain come and continue, he said.

An option for the lawn is UC Verde Grass, also known as Buffalo Grass, a drought-resistant grass recently developed.

"Once established," Main said, "it make only take water, perhaps, every two weeks."

Another alternative is artificial turf, but that may not be appealing to potential buyers.

There are also shrubs which can be used in place of grassy areas.

Some plants that are good to plant in these times of drought and are attractive include Butterfly Bushes (*Budelia*), Flowering Yucca (*Hesperaloe*), Mexican Bird of Paradise (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima* ), *Acacias*, *Lantanas*, and *Mazanitas*, Main said. There are also a lot of new varieties of pampas-related grasses, he said.

Like the house itself, landscaping should be kept simple, yet attractive. It should allow for potential buyers to see it clean and well kept, yet amenable to potential new plantings of the buyers liking, without much needed removal of existing landscaping.

Declutter, neutralize and add curb appeal are important keys to attracting potential buyers and getting a home sold.

## New Beginnings Abound at Tulare County Animal Services

After several months of holding public meetings on the now adopted Ordinances, Tulare County Animal Services staff are releasing their new name as they get down to the business of caring for animals and serving community residents, recruiting adoptive and foster families, reaching out to community partners for a greater level of collaboration, and embarking on renovations to the existing shelter; all of these changes reflect the efforts of Animal Services to better engage with animal owners here in Tulare County.

"This shift has been a long time coming, while we worked to put the necessary organizational structures and supports in place to accomplish our mission," said Tim Lutz, Director of Fiscal Operations. "We look forward to the next steps as we continue to build greater collaborative relationships with our community partners."

The Ordinances that the Tulare County Board of Supervisors adopted on August 11, 2015 reflect the transition from Tulare County Animal Control to Tulare County Animal Services.

These Ordinances regarding the regulation and control of animals in the unincorporated areas of Tulare County can be found at: www.tchhsa.org/hhsa/index.cfm/the-hhsa-community/animal-control-ordinances/description/.

The newly minted name, Animal Services, reflects the importance placed on community education, outreach regarding animal health and safety, and the facilitation of animal adoptions.

The two primary units that now fall under Animal Services are Animal Care and Adoption Services and Animal Control and Licensing.

Staff in these units take care of the shelter operations and outreach and the traditional licensing and control operations.

Renovations to the Animal Services' shelter's canine kennel and support offices, located at 14131 Avenue 256 in Visalia, begin on September 8, 2015, and are anticipated to go into the first week of February 2016.

Adoptions, licensing, and accepting lost animals services are still provided at the shelter location.

During the renovation, for their own comfort, dogs are being provided offsite housing.

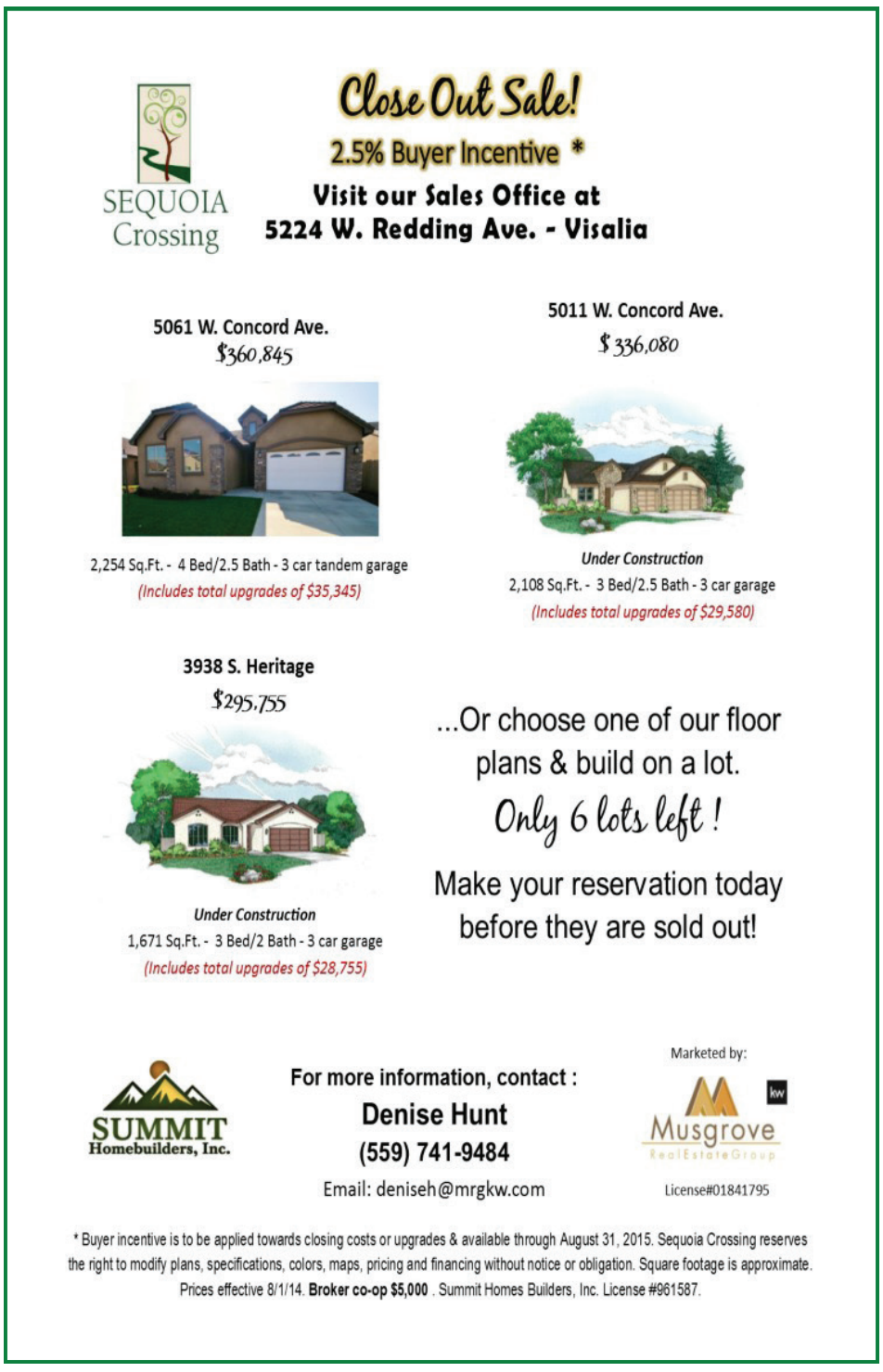
A pilot program, "Foster-to-own", is being introduced during this season to help ensure adoptive families have enough time to interact with the animal prior to adoption.

Staff members can bring dogs to the shelter location for community members who may wish to adopt.

Animal Services is asking for residents' patience with this renovation.

Any residents wishing to help Animal Services during this season, please consider adopting or fostering animals, especially litters of puppies or kittens. For those interested in fostering, please contact Animal Services at (559) 636-4050.

Residents can contact Animal Services via phone at (559) 636-4080, or email at AnimalControlSupport@tularehhsa.org.



# Agriculture

California Citrus Mutual

## 2015-2016 Navel Crop Pegged at 86 Million 40-Pound Cartons

The Cooperative Agriculture Support Services Authority 2015-16 California Navel Orange Objective Measurement Report, released on September 11, forecasts the upcoming navel crop to be 86 million 40 pound cartons. Eighty-three of the 86 million cartons are projected to be produced in the three county Central Valley region comprising District 1 and represents an 8.5% increase over the 77 million cartons harvested last year. The varieties forecast in this report include conventional, organic and specialty Navel oranges.

The Agricultural Statistic Service conducts the crop survey and generates its projections based on random sampling of the number of fruit per tree and fruit size, combined with historical information, and then using statistical formulas to produce the estimate. In this year's survey the fruit count per tree in District 1 is 412, up 19% from the previous year, and 18.5% above the five-year average set of 336 fruit per tree. The average September 1 fruit diameter was 2.248, which is above the five average diameter of 2.230. The estimate is calculated on 2,000 fewer acres than last year.

Growers, packinghouse field men, and shippers that California Citrus Mutual spoke with prior to the report release, generally believed that the crop was at least the same as last year and probably bigger than last year. Fruit size was reported to be larger and fruit set, especially on late varieties, is better in most groves. The improved fruit size is attributed to timely rainfall and good growing conditions following petal fall last spring. Early rains this fall could result in additional growth that would equate to more cartons.

The external quality is very good and the extended periods of high temperatures this summer have increased brix, so flavor is expected to be excellent this season. The crop is maturing well, with harvest expected to begin in early October.

The industry response to the today's report is that the estimate is a reasonable starting point. The big variable will be the acreage number. Thousands of acres have been removed during the current drought. The 2,000-acre reduction used by CASS is probably conservative, in which case the crop will come in below this estimate.

## Commentary: News on Crop Revenue Reports Misses Part of Story

**Dave Kranz**

The word "despite" turned up in headlines from two national news outlets this past week, on stories that threatened to spawn a new narrative in the ongoing discussion of how the California drought has affected farmers and ranchers.

"Despite drought, California has record high crop revenue," USA Today reported.

"Despite the drought, California farms see record sales," read the headline on the NPR website.

The two news outlets drew on different sources to reach their conclusions. The USA Today story was based on a report from an Oakland-based environmental research organization, the Pacific Institute, which had projected 2014 revenues for California-grown field crops, vegetables, melons, fruits and nuts. The NPR story described figures for annual cash receipts, posted online earlier in the week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The first line of the NPR piece outlined the new narrative represented by the two stories: "While prolonged drought has put a strain on California agriculture, most of the state's farms, it seems, aren't just surviving it: They are prospering."

California farmers sold nearly $54 billion worth of crops and commodities in 2014, the story noted, citing USDA statistics that showed an increase of more than 5 percent from the previous year.

Revenues rose, the stories noted, due to strong prices for a wide range of California-grown crops and commodities. And farmers were able to produce those crops and commodities by "draining their groundwater reserves," as NPR put it, or through "unsustainable over-pumping of groundwater," reported USA Today.

Of course, revenues are only half the story of a farm or ranch balance sheet, and groundwater use is only part of the way farmers have responded to water shortages.

More-nuanced coverage of the situation came from news outlets in the San Joaquin Valley, as they reported on record agricultural revenues posted during 2014 in the nation's top three farm counties: Tulare, Kern and Fresno.

In fact, a story in the Porterville Recorder opened by summarizing the narrative that was circulating through the national news.

"Tulare County's record farm values reported earlier this month probably raised a lot of eyebrows," the Recorder story began. "Many probably wondered how farmers can complain about the lack of irrigation water yet still produce a record crop."

**COMMENTARY** continued on **7 »**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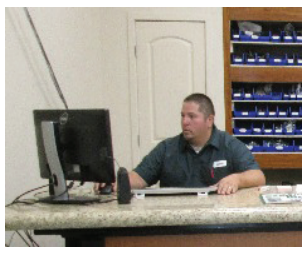

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# Agriculture

## Cheese

Continued from p. 1

plan was halted by a series of lawsuits. CaliCheese, following the prompting of the Tulare County Economic Development Board, took an interest in the land, but came up against opposition from Matheny Tract residents who were concerned about increased traffic, loss of water and pollution. They have since agreed not to raise additional objections, following a set of concessions by CaliCheese.

### Jobs and Job Training Offered

Ashley Werner, an attorney with the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability (LCJA) representing the Matheny Tract Committee, says her clients have pledged not to challenge the construction plan again after CaliCheese pledged $120,000 to provide job training to the area's residents.

"They (Matheny Tract Committee) entered into an agreement with CaliCheese that they felt was in their best interest, and part of that is not to challenge the EIR," Werner said. "The potential for odor was a concern. We looked at similar plants, like the one in Hilmar. Residents in the area had complained about the odor and even flakes of white material on their cars."

The residents were also concerned about the number of delivery trucks that would have to visit the plant to deliver the four million pounds of milk each day, a number that may eventually rise to six million pounds a day, as well as the increased traffic from employees traveling to and from the site. That fear should be lessened by the concessions Werner was able to secure. Werner also said CaliCheese has agreed to a set of guidelines for redressing any future problems its plant may create.

"CaliCheese has also agreed in this process to do job training in the community and is giving them (Matheny Tract residents) job preference," she said. "It could potentially cut down on car traffic from employees going to that site."

### Water Woes

Also a concern for neighbors was the amount of water the plant will consume. With the area already facing water scarcity, the plant will use some 225,000 gallons of water a day, and Matheny Tract residents were concerned it planned to get it from the municipal supply. The city had previously agreed to extend its water system to the Matheny Tract, but has yet to complete the hookup.

"Over the last year, they've been delaying that service, in part because they had concerns about the availability of water," Werner said. "Based on the additional info in the EIR, they felt comfortable it was not going to affect the area."

### No Impact Report

Before it could feel comfortable with the environmental report, one had to actually be written for the CaliCheese project, as the Tulare Planning Commission approved the project initially using the EIR for the now-defunct meat-processing plant plan. It was that lack of an EIR that was the basis for MTC's objections.

"We were able to get a first EIR for this plant," said Werner. "The director had given go-ahead based on an EIR for that location for a meat plant."

Instead of drawing on Tulare's water, the cheese plant will rely on two wells located at the city's waste-water treatment facility that are not connected to the municipal water supply. Water from the plant will be treated at the adjacent waste-water plant.

### Keeping the Lights On

This is not the first time LCJA has acquired concessions from a business hoping to open in the area. In 2012, the firm was able to get Colony Energy, which is in the process of constructing a bio-gas plant near the Matheny Tract, to agree to help improve conditions in the low-income area to avoid a possibly costly lawsuit. Colony, which received a $5 million grant from the state in January to help fund construction of the Tulare plant, will provide streetlights to the Matheny Tract and pay the power bill for them for a decade. In exchange the MTC will not sue to demand an EIR for the project.

According to Colony's website, the facility will produce about 5,000 gallons of diesel fuel a day by capturing methane from decaying ag waste, manure, carcasses, solid waste from cities and food scraps from grocery stores, restaurants and cafeterias. The plant will accept up to 500 tons of such waste per day.

### Community Getting First Park

Lastly, the agreement between the MTC and CaliCheese will see the first development of a park in the area, Werner said, using part of the $120,000 CaliCheese has pledged.

"They don't have any green space," she said of the Matheny Tract. "It's important to the community members to have somewhere for their children to play."

## Commentary

Continued from p. 6

But, the story continued, "The answer is not simple."

The story quoted the county agricultural commissioner, a local farmer, and Tulare County Farm Bureau Executive Director Tricia Stever Blattler, each of whom explained the difference between the gross cash receipts listed in the crop reports and net farm income.

"Yes, we have higher prices, but that doesn't translate into higher profits," farmer Eric Borba told the newspaper.

That was a detail noted in many of the local news stories but missing from most of the national coverage.

And here's the thing: Information about the "expenses" side of the ledger is also readily available.

On the same day that it posted the updated figures on cash receipts, the USDA Economic Research Service also posted a new table detailing production expenses for farms and ranches.

Those figures show that at the same time cash receipts for California crops set a record, production expenses also set a record. In the same year that cash receipts increased a little more than 5 percent, production expenses rose nearly 10 percent. And subtracting the expenses figure from the receipts figure, the "net" number decreased by more than 6 percent in 2014.

We're providing those numbers—and links to the USDA webpages where they're available—to reporters who contact us at the California Farm Bureau as they prepare their own "despite drought …" stories.

We're also trying to provide perspective on the second news narrative, the one about how California farmers' assumed prosperity is based on a shaky base of profligate groundwater use.

We point out to reporters that no one is more concerned about the health of groundwater aquifers than California farmers and ranchers, and that groundwater levels have typically recovered quickly after previous droughts. We also reiterate that one of the best ways to reduce the pressure on groundwater supplies is by enhancing supplies from other sources: building new surface-water reservoirs, improving availability of recycled water, desalinating seawater for urban coastal regions.

Of course, we also note the significant investments farmers have made to improve irrigation efficiency, through changes in irrigation systems and through changes in management including enhanced weather, soil and crop monitoring.

There's another point worth making, in the wake of the reports on record agricultural cash receipts:

It's the farmer's job to make the most he or she can out of the resources available. California farmers and ranchers have done that, through the thick of this punishing drought.

Now the question is: Will they be admired for that, or criticized?

*(Dave Kranz is manager of the California Farm Bureau Federation Communications/News Division and editor of Ag Alert. He may be contacted at dkranz@cfbf.com.)*

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# Porterville to Revisit Allowing Marijuana Dispensary

**Nancy Vigran**

Marijuana dispensaries are no longer something new, but the possibility of conceding for one to open within the city limits of Porterville is coming.

In 1996, the Compassionate Use Act (Proposition 215) passed, making it legal within California to use the drug for medical purposes. It was the first state to do so. With that, Tulare County cities started passing laws for the legalization of growing the drug, for personal use, within city limits including Lindsay, Dinuba, Visalia, Woodlake and Farmersville. Porterville was added to that list last year.

Shortly after, dispensaries began popping up around the state, with or without business licenses.

At the time of adopting the acceptance of private grows for personal use, Porterville vowed to revisit the idea of dispensaries in a year.

They are following up on that, with the mayor, vice mayor and several staff members, including the police chief, city attorney and community development director, all visiting other local dispensaries to see how they are run.

An appointment was made to visit a Goshen dispensary. Mayor Milt Stowe found this one to be a favorable business format.

"The one that we were able to access was very transparent," the mayor said. "If we had a potential business (wanting to open in Porterville), I don't think council would have any problem with that."

Everything is done above board, Stowe explained of the Goshen dispensary. The store has an entrance room, where medical cards are checked, and a private room, where patients can purchase their medication in privacy, he said.

While Police Chief Eric Kroutil said he will not be making any recommendations to council, since there are discrepancies between state and federal law on the legalization of marijuana, he did visit the site with the mayor.

"The owner is running it like a business," Kroutil said. "He has a business license, submits taxes and has about 15 or 16 employees that work for him.

"The other thing I thought that was positive, is prior to sale, it (the product) is tested for pesticides, herbicides and pH levels by an independent tester."

Kroutil added that the drug may be tested for other things as well, but he knew of those three things.

But Kroutil does have reservations about allowing a dispensary within Porterville city limits.

"One of my biggest concerns is the source of the marijuana," he said.

He wants to assure the safety of its use for the patients, he said.

"There is also a potentially violent issue there," he said. "Does that perpetuate a crime by another person?"

That possible crime could be one of a grower. Many personal growers are growing beyond their needs (or allotment) for resale illegally, he added.

"We know of some who sell to Bakersfield (dispensaries)," he said.

His hope is that the problem would not become compounded.

Another concern is for the dispensary itself, the security of the site, Kroutil said. He looks to the safety of the patients, foremost, but also for the potential of break-ins.

While visiting the Goshen dispensary, the mayor, police chief and the rest of the group tried to access a second shop. They were turned away. That was the type of dispensary the city does not want, Kroutil said.

**MARIJUANA** continued on **9 »**

# Lindsay

Continued from p. 1

be $262,000 in the hole."

### Spreading the Burden

If the sales tax goes into effect, the money raised would likely be directed into the general fund, which is short because the city is still making loan payments for improvements downtown made a decade ago, before the economic collapse of 2008. The majority of the general fund, 85%, is spent on the city's fire department and police force.

Two of the other cities that have adopted local sales taxes, Farmersville and Porterville, tied their measures to funding public safety. The move means visitors to those cities help fund those critical services, making such a tax more attractive to Lindsay, which sees an influx of visitors to its McDermott Field House.

### Council Already Divided

However, hiring a consultant to usher the possible tax through the ballot process has cost other local cities around $30,000, a sum Lindsay cannot afford.

"My biggest concern is how do we have the money to even go after this," said Councilwoman Pamela Kimbell. "I don't think we cannot afford to do it, down the road, but it's going to be really hard right now."

Kimbell joined Mayor Ramona Villarreal-Padilla and Councilman Danny Salinas in voting to direct staff to continue researching the sales tax. Mayor Pro Tem Rosaena Sanchez voted against going ahead, and Councilman Steve Mecum, who has a history of voting against tax and fee increases, was absent. This presents a possible problem, as the ordinance calling for any sales tax increase must have approval of at least four of the five council members. The notion left Interim City Manager Bill Zigler with some seeming trepidation over the cost should the Council be unable to reach agreement.

"It's just about potentially spending money to do the research, and a whole lot of staff time; it's very technical," he said. "If we don't have four-fifths that can ultimately approve this thing, we're going to be left longing and we're going to fail."

Despite that fear, staff will continue developing the plan, bringing it back to the Council at its next meeting with the hope a four-fifths agreement can be found.

"That's a tight spot to be put on," said Villarreal-Padilla.

# *Times-Delta*'s Sister Paper, *Salinas Californian*, Cuts Production

**Catherine Doe**

Any fear of the *Salinas Californian* overshadowing the *Visalia Times-Delta* (VTD) was put to bed last month. After 144 years of publication, the *Salinas Californian* announced that it was going to transition from a daily to three days a week, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The change starts September 28. Since their announcement, the *Salinas Californian* has lost one of their sports writers, Quinn Robinson, to the VTD.

Pete Wevurski, editor for both the *Salinas Californian* and VTD, said in a column that "change is inevitable. You can't avoid it; you can only adapt to it or be left behind."

Does that mean that the VTD is headed for the same fate? The VTD has, for the last decade, been losing local control because it is owned by publishing behemoth, Gannett. The VTD shares its editor, Pete Wevurski, and publisher, Paula Goudreau, with the *Salinas Californian* and layout of the paper is done in Phoenix.

Yet unlike the *Salinas Californian,* the VTD seems to be thriving with no indication it will lose its place as being the largest daily in Tulare County. Distribution in Salinas, with a population of 155,000, has tanked to 5,000 a day, but in Visalia, population 129,000, the distribution is around 20,000 a day. Advertising seems strong and the VTD web traffic is robust.

The consensus is that distribution tanked because the quality of the information has decreased over the years. The editor for the *Monterey Partisan*, Royal Calkins, wrote about Salinas, "I worry about the community, one that has already lost much of its cohesion because of the newspaper's slow but steady decline in recent years." His sentiments were echoed by the *Californian*'s readers. One on-line commenter said, "The *Californian* has been in a slow spiral down for years. The slogan used to be 'Yesterdays News Tomorrow,' but now even that isn't very accurate. I've read coverage of events which I had attended and after reading the coverage, wondered if it was really the same event." Another reader said, "Sad news!? If anything it's closer to no news, which is perfect given that that is what the *Californian* is best at publishing."

Wevurski expresses no such concerns. His reason for the paper going to three times a week is that Salina's population is predominantly millennial and Latinos who want to read their news digitally. Wevurski continues on his Facebook that the *Californian* has changed the paper's focus from the boring daily grind to "passion topics." He explained, "Previously, they ranged from ag to public safety to government accountability to helping our children succeed. Effective September 28, they become 'My Safety,' 'My Needs,' 'My Free Time,' 'My Neighbors' and "My Planet.'"

In an incredible display of spin, Wevurski describes the transition to three days a week as, "We've changed our approach from reporting the news to providing information you can use. We won't be talking at you anymore; we intend to engage you in conversations where your point of view is as valid – perhaps even more valid – than ours."

The *Salinas Californian* readers didn't share Wevurski's enthusiasm for all the changes. One on-line comment said, "I'm tired of stories that are important to the families of Salinas being ignored in favor of fluff pieces that serve no one. I'm tired of journalists posing questions and never following through with answers. I'm tired of journalists who do not live in Salinas (The Californian uses three of VTD's reporters) and do not understand us reporting our news with condescension."

Are all these changes part of Gannett's "newsroom of the future?" Go out and get a subscription to the *Visalia Times-Delta* and let's not find out.

# Board of Supervisors Formalizes Step Up Committee

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors has officially established Step Up as a formal advisory committee. In doing so, the Step Up Committee will solidify the future of the program which seeks to address issues that affect all youth in Tulare County.

More specifically, the committee's focus is to redirect youth from truancy, suspension and expulsion by encouraging participation in positive activities and extra-curricular involvement. Through collaboration, the committee will work to diminish arrest/referral rates, substance abuse and teen pregnancy by fostering positive associations and social networks.

As part this action, the Board of Supervisors is seeking qualified applicants for the committee.

"Step Up is looking for individuals who want to collaborate with communities, stakeholders, youth and their parents to find innovative ways to make a positive impact on the lives of Tulare County youth," said Step Up Program Administrator Allison Pierce.

Currently, the advisory committee is in need of applicants who qualify under one of the three following descriptions: Community Advocate, Faith-Based Community member and Business Community member. All applications are due by noon on Friday, September 25 and can be found on the Tulare County Clerk of the Board's web page- www.tularecounty.ca.gov/clerkoftheboard.

Appointment of committee members is scheduled to take place during the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, October 6 with the first official Step Up Committee meeting set for Friday, October 16.

### COMMUNITY FORUM

Visalia residents interested in learning more about the issues affecting Tulare County youth and Step Up Programming are invited to an informational meeting on Monday, September 21, 2015.

The community forum will feature a panel discussion and Q&A session with local law enforcement agency representatives. Gang awareness, prevention and solutions are central topics of the forum taking place from 6:30-8:00pm at 210 Café, 210 W. Center Ave, Visalia.

"This forum offers the citizens of Visalia a chance to hear directly from the law enforcement officers dealing with daily gang activity and violence," said District Three Supervisor Phil Cox. "Visalians will have an opportunity to have their questions answered by those who know the issues best."

For more information about the Step Up Advisory Committee, Step Up Programming, and/or the community forum, please contact Step Up Program Administrator Allison Pierce at (559) 636-5000 or agpierce@co.tulare.ca.us. Information is also available online at www.stepuptc.com.

# Porterville

Continued from p. 8

It is now up to community development and code enforcement to determine their recommendations for council. Mayor Stowe expects that to come within the next couple of months, he said.

"Right now, we would be looking at one possible dispensary," Stowe said, "for people looking for medication, who cannot grown their own."

That marijuana dispensary would be to assist the residents of Porterville.

Currently state legislature is taking a look at how to get the banking needs of such dispensaries met. Most financial institutions refuse to provide accounts to dispensary owners, because federal law still states that marijuana is an illegal substance.

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# Briefly...

## "EVERY HERO" IS A SUMMER READING SUCCESS!

Tulare County Library wrapped up Summer Reading 2015 with over 9,000 participants, which includes 2,656 children, teens, and adults who signed up for reading logs and prizes. This year we celebrated summer with *Every Hero has a Story,* so it is not surprising there were lots of fun superhero crafts and activities. In addition, we recognized our real life heroes with story times, a safety fair, and visits by Fire, Police, Ambulance Drivers, School Staff, and the Red Cross.

Special performances this year included a magician, reptiles and other wildlife, musicians, Native American dancers, and more. Children and parents turned out for reading, performers, and activities in all Tulare County Library*s fifteen locations, with Visalia seeing a huge turnout for performances with up to 400 at each event. Congratulations to our Librarians and Library Staff for being the heroes of Summer Reading. Also, grateful thanks to the Friends of the Tulare County Library for our Summer Reading special programs!

## VISALIA SCRAPS SINGLE-CAN SYSTEM

In 1989, Visalia implemented a trash collection system using a single can split into sections for household trash on one side and recyclables on the other. Last week the Visalia City Council scrapped this approach in favor of a two can system. Green waste will retain its separate bin.

The reason for the change is the overwhelming popularity of recycling--which, in 1989, was something of a new concept. Visalians will switch to using three 96-gallon cans.

But it could require years for the new system to begin while costs and logistics are figured. There are roughly 40,000 split cans currently in use, and these are serviced by split-bed trucks. The conversion of equipment, and the conversion from two waste streams--recyclables/trash in one, green waste in another--to three separate streams could take so long as four years.

## WHCCD ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS SERIES TO TACKLE SAN JOAQUIN ECONOMIC ISSUES

West Hills Community College District will continue its Essential Elements series with *Shifting Ground: Adapting the San Joaquin Economy to a Changing Climate* on Thursday, October 8 at Harris Ranch Inn and Conference Center in Coalinga. Seats are still available for the event.

The daylong conference will focus on water, food, energy, goods movement, and career and technical education, with the goal of connecting state and San Joaquin Valley public and private leaders to discuss and prioritize immediate regional actions toward job creation and economic development. The objective is to leave the host venue with a to-do list and responsible parties.

Speakers will include: Lynda Resnick, vice chair and co-owner of The Wonderful Company; Tim Rainey, executive director of the California Workforce Development Board; Joe Del Bosque, farmer and member of the California Water Commission; Lance Donny, CEO of OnFarm Services; Art Sponseller, president and CEO of Hospital Council of Northern and Central California; and Glenda Humiston, vice president of the University of California Division of Ag and Natural Resources.

Remarks will be delivered by: Dr. Frank Gornick, chancellor of the West Hills Community College District; John Harris, owner of Harris Farms; and Jim Mayer, president and CEO of California Forward.

The list of distinguished panelists and registration information is available at http://www.essentialelementsseries.com.

For more information, visit the website or contact Kathy Finster at kathyfinster@whccd.edu or 559-934-2141.

## GOT DRUGS? TURN IN UNUSED, EXPIRED MEDICATIONS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

The United States Drug Enforcement Administration and local law enforcement agencies are providing the public with an opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medication (including pet medication), both in pill and liquid form in a safe and secure manner. Disposal of medications in the trash or toilet is unsafe, causes environmental harm, and is prohibited.

To participate in the take-back event, place medications, pills, capsules, and tablets of unwanted medication and vitamins into a zip-lock plastic bag (keep liquid medications in their original container in the bag) and take the sealed bags to the drop off locations at the dates and times listed below. This event is for residential use only and medication from hospitals, pharmacies, doctor's offices, etc., will not be accepted.

This is a one-time a year, free event for all residents of Tulare County. For more information, contact the participating local law enforcement agencies:

Dinuba Police Department, 680 S Alta Ave. Dinuba, 591-5914 September 26 10 am – 2 pm

Farmersville Police Department, 909 W. Visalia Rd., Farmersville, 747-0321 September 21-25 8 am - 12 noon September 26 10 am – 2 pm

Lindsay Dept. of Public Safety. 185 North Gale Hill, Lindsay, 562-2511 September 26 10 am – 2 pm

Tulare City Hall - Rear Parking Lot, 411 E. Kern Ave., Tulare, 358-6277 September 26 10 am – 2 pm

Visalia Police Department, 303 S. Johnson, Visalia, 713-4216 September 26 10 am – 2 pm

Tulare County Sheriff's Office and Substations September 21-25 8 am – 4 pm September 26 10 am – 2 pm § Tulare County Sheriffs Office, 2404 W. Burrel, Visalia, 636-4625 § Cutler-Orosi Sheriff's Substation, 40765 Road 128, Cutler, 591-5810 § Pixley Sheriff's Substation, 161 N. Pine St., Pixley, 757-3525 § Porterville Sheriffs Substation, 379 North 3rd St., Porterville, 782-9650

For more information, visit www.takebackyourmeds.org/dea-events

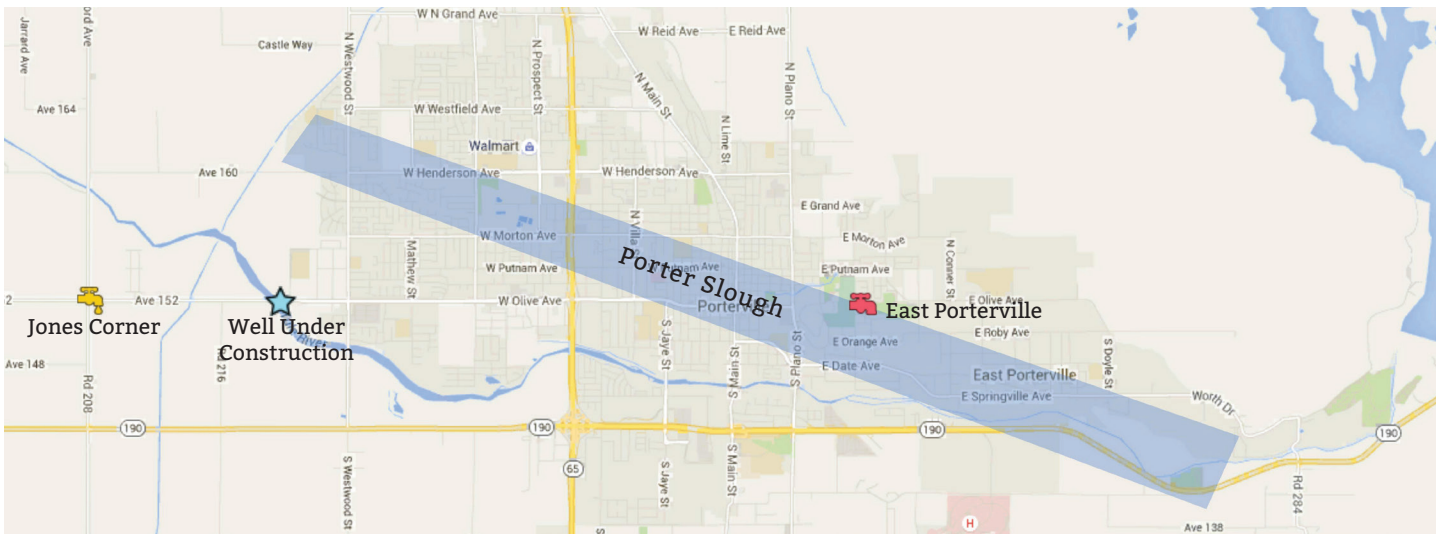
# Porterville

Continued from p. 1

the 1,700-1,800 residences in the unincorporated area of East Porterville.

Drilling for the 1,000-foot deep well began in late August and should be completed within a couple months, said Melissa Withnell, public information officer for the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. The county has hired Dee Jasper and Associates, based in Bakersfield, to handle the job. Dee Jasper and Associates currently maintains all of Porterville wells.

The cost is expected to be $2.2 million, with $1.2 million coming from the California Department of Water Resources, and $500,000 each from the State Water Control Board and the US Department of Agriculture, Withnell said.




Porter Slough extends through Porterville and East Porterville. Map data: Google

## Existing Infrastructure Slated for Use

Some residences in East Porterville have infrastructure already in place to accept water coming from the main along the streets, which can be hooked up into the Porterville system. In fact, the city already owns the mains, having purchased the water system more than 30 years ago, said Mike Reed, acting public works director for Porterville.

The system was purchased with the anticipation of someday being annexed into city limits. That infrastructure was repaired and connected contaminated wells had to be destroyed, Reed said.

Some residences there have long been hooked into the city water system. And, now more of it may come into use, prior to any annexation.

In general, "an attempt at annexation should happen first," he said. "If that can't happen, an irrevocable decision to accept annexation must take place."

This decision and a signed agreement as such will need to be made for each of the 115 residences prior to their individual hookup.

Generally an annexation takes place when a developer wants to add land to city limits to utilize water and other city services, Reed explained. That developer pays the fees for studies and legalities concerning that annexation. However, in this type of unchartered emergency and without that having happened, the city will not yet move forward with annexation of that area, although is willing to provide water services with the agreement that the property owner will not fight annexation should that day come.

The 115 properties have met criteria set by the city to allow hookup possibilities. Those criteria included a lot size of 25,000 square feet or less, and being a single-family dwelling that has access to the city's existing main line, Reed said. From that, the city figured out who in that neighborhood would qualify, which determined the 115 properties.

While East Porterville begins just across N. Leggett Street from the somewhat green Porterville Municipal Golf Course, the furthest approved property for the city's water use is a little more than two miles from within city limits.

When the time arrives, the water connection fee will be waived by the city for the 115 residences. However, property owners will be responsible for house to main service, a meter and backflow prevention, Reed said.

The new county well, which is designated to become part of the Porterville water system, is being drilled directly adjacent to the currently dry Tule Riverbed alongside Olive Avenue. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

But this connection will not come as early as the well is completed. Once the well's ownership falls upon Porterville, the city will not be able to aid the rural community with water until the state's Emergency Drought Declaration is lifted. If property owners of the 115 approved properties then wish to sign up for city water, they may.

## City Has its Own Water Issues

Porterville, like other South Valley cities, has concerns for its own wells.

"We are having trouble meeting our own demands," Reed said.

In 2009, the city hired a groundwater hydrologist to review the conditions of the groundwater under the city. This is something, Reed explained, the state requires of any city considering adding commercial development as part of the environmental impact report.

"We were already in overdraft of about 1,200 acre feet," he said.

It was then city council determined to set aside $150,000 annually for water recharge. The city also owns 450 shares of Pioneer Water Company, which provides an annual dividend of some water as well.

When Success Lake, through the Porterville Irrigation District, recently offered 660 acre-feet of water to the city, there was no hesitation.

"We said, 'Yes,'" Reed said.

Water was run in two equal cycles a week apart, down the Porter Slough, which runs from the Tule River under East Porterville to the city. The second cycle ended September 12.

"Porterville is very amenable to slough runs with a natural groundwater waterway," Reed said.

"It's not a lot of water, but it's better than none at all," he added.

It was all the water district had to offer at this time.

Along its way, under East Porterville, the water could have helped some wells and residences out there, Reed said.

## Recycled Water May Be in the Future

Porterville is also considering a feasibility study for a recycled water program which could potentially water all open land spaces including the golf course and parks, with an option of it to also serve as a possible recharge to the ground water. Another viable option would be for recycled water to also be used on the city's 630-acre farming operation, which is currently used to grow non-edible crops such as alfalfa or Sudan grass. With recycled water, this could open its use for edible crops such as walnuts, Reed said.

Talks have begun between the county, the city and Porter Vista Utility District on finding long-term solutions for neighbors whose properties did not qualify for this initial city hookup. A $500,000 feasibility study, the cost of which would fall upon the county's shoulders, may ensue for all possibilities of providing water to the East Porterville community. The possibility of that study will be discussed by the county's board of supervisors.

## Jones Corner Water Worries Not Necessary

As for the concerns of the Jones Corner residents and their water, currently there is no problem with the amount of the water available for them. That water system was purchased many years ago, included in a package of water systems Porterville picked up when annexing other property, Reed said. Since the city is having trouble meeting its demands on a daily basis, the system serving Jones Corner was the reasonable solution for which to draw water for water for other county communities in need, he said.

The water levels are checked there every two weeks, prior to Porterville City Council meetings, to assure there are not any problems, and there have not been, Reed said. Occasionally, there are electrical problems with the pump equipment, which can be a problem with any well, he said, and those are immediately repaired.

"What I did promise (Jones Corner residents), once (and if) there is a concern, we will stop (allowing the county to take water)," Reed said.

The agreement, when the county started utilizing water from that district, was that it would not take more than 500,000 gallons per month. As of the beginning of September, that amount was 649,500 gallons total.

"They are way under what we agreed they could use," Reed said¸ adding that the county has been very conscious of everyone's concerns for water.

The water used by county sources is paid for by the county, through state Drought Relief funds, to the city. Jones Corner residents have long been paying for their water to the city, in the same way and amount as city residents.

Other county water relief efforts have worked out well. For the unincorporated area of Seville, with a water system that could no longer meet the demands of its 500 residents, a new well was drilled in August, 2014 through grant funding, providing a good water source there. Cameron Creek residents, just outside of Farmersville, who were also seeing dry wells, were given the opportunity to hookup to the City of Farmersville water system starting in March of this year. The infrastructure allowing this was also provided through grant funding.

"As I have heard it described," Withnell said, "'it took us a few years to get into this situation, it will take us a few years to get us out.'"

Unincorporated East Porterville begins just across Leggett Street from the maintained and somewhat green Porterville Municipal Golf Course. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

# Problems

Continued from p. 1

two cell phones. Smith also believes the police were recording the incident. The police forcibly took Smith's phones after Smith had been pulled out of his car and was on the ground, he said.

Melo said she believes Merrill was at Smith's house to obtain a "waiver of a search document" so they could legally view the videos on Smith's phones. Judges do not issue search warrants in cases that involve misdemeanors, Melo said, so the police would need Smith's consent to open his phone and watch the videos. Smith was arrested for resisting arrest, which is considered a misdemeanor.

It is Smith's opinion the police have already watched the videos, he said. While Smith was in the patrol car, after being arrested, he could see five policemen huddled around his phones laughing and joking and assumed that they were watching the recording of the incident, he said.

On September 11, Smith and Koonce had another encounter with the Tulare Police, this one involving Chizum, Smith's dog, which was tasered and pepper sprayed during Smith's arrest. Smith and Koonce were staying at the Hampton Inn, a dog-friendly hotel, for about a week while repairs were being done on their kitchen at home. While Smith was outside with Chizum, a security guard leaned down and put his face next to Chizum's and the dog bit him. The security guard apologized saying that he should have known better than put his face into the face a dog that did not know him, especially since he had worked with guard dogs while in the military.

Jonathan Smith

Nevertheless, Tulare Animal Control was notified to assess the situation. An agreement was made between Smith and Tulare Animal Control that the dog would be kept in quarantine for 22 days at their home. Tulare Animal Control was going to come by Smith's house the next Monday to check on the dog and the quarantine situation.

Smith and Koonce left the hotel and secured Chizum inside their home. They changed hotels that afternoon to La Quinta Suites. That evening both Smith and Koonce began getting calls from their neighbors. The neighbors reported that five patrol cars were outside their home and that the police were looking inside the windows. Koonce and Smith ran home, where Tulare Animal Control Officer Michael Capote told them that the police had arrived to take Chizum. Koonce explained that everything was arranged earlier that day with a different animal control officer. He said that Chizum was to stay quarantined at their home. Capote told Koonce that he had been misinformed. Capote identified himself as the officer who brought Chizum home after the first police incident on August 25 and that he was just trying to do Koonce and Smith a favor.

In the meantime, the entire neighborhood was outside and on the street recording the incident on their phones.

"I mean everybody," said Koonce.

Smith and Koonce, who are apparently well-liked throughout the neighborhood, have been supported by their neighbors, who have kept an eye out for them and their home since the incident.

According to Koonce, as the neighbors and their cell phones became more apparent, one by one the patrol cars left until there was only one. After a brief conversation, Capote decided to abide by the original agreement of home quarantine made with animal control and left without the dog. No one from animal control has been back since and Chizum is still at home in quarantine.

A hearing is scheduled for Smith's case on Thursday, September 24 ,when the Tulare County District Attorney can press charges for resisting arrest or else drop the charges completely.

# Hidden Valley

Continued from p. 7

negotiatated with an interested agency, the Land will be offered to private parties for purchase."

No regulation precludes a developer from approaching the city to express their interest in buying the land, but the likelihood of a school or hospital coming up with more than $1 million dollars is exceedingly slim.

Although Pyle says that there is no buyer, a January agenda staff report stated that, "The City obtained an appraisal after a private party showed interest in the Land." it was reported that the private party wanted to build a residential development on the 18 acres. The property was appraised at $1.2 million.

Mayor Russ Curry said he surveyed a few of the residents near the park prior to talks on selling the vacant land. He said most of the residents were tired of looking at a vacant lot. Curry said those in favor of the sale wanted to see houses built there.

One of the justifications for selling the park is the drought, but questions arose at city meetings about where the water would come from for 100 or more new houses. Hanford has been mandated to cut water use by 28%, but has only succeeded in cutting water consumption by 9.9%. If the City of Hanford can't comply with the state's mandate now, how will it do it with a new housing development, it was asked. Hanford may face fines of $500 a day if they do not comply with the state mandate.

Paul Broussard, who lives next to Hidden Valley, said that the spirit of why the parkland was acquired should not be violated by a developer's money.

Brad Lakritz, whose father, Simon Lakritz, was a Hanford city council member for 25 years and who played a central role in developing the park, said, "The land purchased by the City of Hanford to build Hidden Valley Park was promised to all the people of the city. Should the city choose to sell the land to developers for a 'profit' the benefit will be to a very small group of people."

### The Spirit of the Original Purchase of Hidden Valley

During public comment at the September 8 planning commission meeting, Maureen Fakuda suggested that the staff research the original intent of Hanford's leaders in buying Hidden Valley. As an older citizen of Hanford, who lives close to the park, Fakuda's tax money went to buy the property. She, along with other residents, want the current leadership to respect the spirit in which the property was bought in 1967.

According to a 1971 *Hanford Sentinel* article, it seems the leaders at that time intended the park to be a place where Boy Scouts could camp and families could picnic.

The *Sentinel* article stated, "Councilmen agreed the parks should be primarily a wilderness area, rather than a manicured site for organized sports and large organizations. It will be meant to facilitate families and small groups in a secluded setting. The park would include a hilly area in front, with numerous trees and trails with horseback riding and bicycles meandering to the rear portion. The middle part would consist of lakes or a system of lagoons connected by bridges and surrounded by weeping willows. Picnic spaces would surround the small lakes. The rear of the park would contain a large play area and a heavily forested area for archery and camping."

Not only was the original intent to develop the 38 acres over 10 years, but the goal was to expand Hidden Valley Park.

"The consultants raised the possibility of the city purchasing adjacent land to the northeast and southwest for an intensive recreation area featuring tennis, badminton, volleyball and basketball on one parcel and a golf course on the other."

Fakuda ended her comments about why the park has not reached its potential, "it's not a lack of desire, it's a lack of leadership," she said.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TOPIC: Shoulder & Sports Medicine
Thursday, September 24
5:30-6:30 PM
Exeter Courthouse
Art Gallery & Museum
125 S. B St., Exeter
Speakers:
Bruce Le, D.O.
Orthopedic Associates
Angela Duran, PT, CLT
Exeter Therapy Specialists

TOPIC: Total Knee Replacement
Tuesday, September 29
5:30-6:30 PM
Claude Meitzenheimer Community Center
830 Blackstone St., Tulare
Speakers:
Burton Redd, M.D.
Orthopedic Associates
Kaweah Delta HEALTH CARE DISTRICT
More than medicine. Life.
www.kaweahdelta.org
No registration required. For information please call (559) 624-2463

# Viewpoint

## Water Crisis Requires Immediate Action

The approaching close of the regular 2016 session of California's State legislature has once again seen our state government choose fish over people when addressing one of the worst droughts in our state's history.

Assemblyman Devon Mathis

Since 2008, government regulators have allowed well over one trillion gallons of fresh water to pour into the Pacific Ocean to protect the Delta Smelt, a fish whose population was rated in June by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife's index as zero when biologists were only able to locate six specimens.

On August 25, I joined several of my Assembly colleagues in calling for a special session of the legislature to address our state's dire water needs. The Governor's office denied our request and said they were doing enough already.

We argued that the state has yet to spend up to half of the $687 million set aside to help drought stricken communities, and funds from last year's $7.5 billion water bond have been spent at a disappointingly slow pace while producing no tangible relief.

It was reported on August 30 in an Associated Press story headlined "When the wells run dry: California families cope in drought" that 1,252 of household wells within Tulare County have been depleted. While Californians throughout the state have been asked to make significant cuts to their water usage, there are thousands of residents in my district who do not have running water. It's not that their lawns are turning brown, but when they turn on the faucet or flush the toilet – nothing happens.

This is the saddest public health issue of our time.

Earlier this year, Democratic Assemblyman Luis Alejo and I introduced AB-954, which if passed, would have allocated $10 million of the state's general fund to be used to finance relief for those who have had their wells dry up.

My staff and I worked hard for months to get the bill through the legislative piping, and our efforts paid off when the bill passed the Assembly and advanced onto the state Senate.

Unfortunately, on August 27, Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Senator Ricardo Lara (D- Bell Gardens) put the bill on suspense, a procedure that essentially kills the bill.

When I heard the news, I was heartbroken, but not yet beaten. In the Army, they taught us that when there is an obstacle in our way, you either flank it or find a way to go through it.

Just as my team and I worked hard to get AB-954 through the Assembly, we will regroup, evaluate the options, and do everything we can to get relief passed and to those who need it.

I have found allies across the political aisle that understand that this drought isn't affecting those who are suffering the embarrassment of a brown yard, but rather the most impoverished and vulnerable among us.

We have passed the time where we can debate the philosophical and environmental impacts of diverting water out to the ocean to save a nearly extinct fish. Now, it is time that our government of the people, and by the people, started working for the people.

-Assemblyman Devon Mathis

## Open Letter to the County Sheriff

**FROM:** We the People; www.PoweroftheCountySheriff.com

**TO:** County Sheriff; (3133 counties)

Dear Sheriff;

Do you know your Constitutional Duties? Do you understand that the County Sheriff is a Constitutional Officer, elected by the People, bound by oath as guardian of the Peoples' unalienable rights secured by the Constitution?

Do you know the Constitution is the Law of the Land? Do you know that if the Sheriff is ignorant to the Constitution, "which is common law," it would stand to reason that he is in violation of his oath, not comprehending when judges and other servants violate the Law of the Land, and thereby technically guilty of treason?

Do you know that the duties, responsibilities and authorities of the Sheriff cannot be diminished by those in the legislature, courts and state constitutions?

Do you know that being a constitutional law enforcer means you are to be looking for and understand when elected, appointed and hired servants violate their oath of office by abusing the People, and that it is your duty to protect the victim?

Do you know that the Sheriff is the "Chief Executive and Administrative Officer" of a county, his principal duties being to aid in the criminal and civil courts of record [common law courts]; such as serving process, summoning juries, executing judgments, holding judicial sales and the like; and that he is also the chief conservator of the peace within his county? Do you know that you are not to be looking for code violations by the People but for constitutional violations by elected, appointed and hired servants?

Do you know that when federal agents come into your county to execute a warrant that they are to notify you first and show documents proving due process has been met and that without such documents it is your duty to prevent the execution or you would be a co-conspirator?

Do you know that it is your duty to arrest federal agents that execute unlawful warrants that violate due process?

Do you know what due process looks like? Do you know that most federal warrants do not meet due process and that makes you co-conspirator?

Do you know that you should have direct contact with the Grand Jury and that you should not seek approval of the prosecutor or the judge and that it is your duty to seek an indictment from a Grand Jury?

Do you know that when a prosecutor or a judge interferes with your relationship with the Grand Jury or attempts to stop your pursuit of an indictment that, that is felony rescue and that you should arrest the prosecutor or the judge for the same or you would be guilty of the same?

Do you know that if a prosecutor or a judge try's to block you from seeing the Grand Jury that you can call twenty-five (25) People out of the phone book or any other list of People within the county and have them meet you at the courthouse to consider an indictment and that if thirteen (13) or more agree you have your indictment?

There is no magic in calling a Grand Jury any twenty-five People within your county will do.

Do you know that the judge and the prosecutor by monopolizing on the calling of the Grand Jury, controls who gets indicted and who doesn't and that, that puts them above the law and eliminates you out of the process altogether and by allowing this to happen you violate your oath?

How many times do we hear Sheriffs say, *"I cannot arrest a judge without first getting the prosecutor to agree otherwise the prosecutor may refuse to prosecute";* so, if the Sheriff needs to ask permission, he's not the Chief and he passes his duties to others, and any Sheriff that does that is in violation of his oath.

Do you know that Alaska, Arizona, Vermont and Wyoming have no law requiring pistol owners to have a permit to carry?

Colorado, Iowa, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota and Virginia, according to the NRA are considering bills in current legislative sessions to end permit requirements.

The United States Supreme Court quoting the rules of criminal and civil procedure said: *"The carrying of arms in a quiet, peaceable, and orderly manner concealed on or about the person is not a breach of the peace. Nor does such an act of itself, lead to a breach of the peace."* Wharton's Criminal and Civil Procedure, 12th Ed., Vol.2: Judy v. Lashley, 5 W. Va. 628, 41 S.E. 197. How can the Sheriff participate in gun control?

The Bill of Rights Amendment II states *"A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."* Do you know this Amendment protects two unalienable rights, both of which articulate the right of self-defense, one personal, the right to protect your-self from another individual shall not be infringed and the other to protect our-self from a rogue government, shall not be infringed?

Some may say the right to keep and bear Arms is for the militia; this makes no sense because We the People are the militia, nor are We the People willing to give up an unalienable right to be able to defend ourselves.

Therefore if the Sheriff does not protect the right of the People to keep and bear arms he is in violation of his oath and subject to removal from office by the People through indictment.

The real test of the Sheriffs Constitutional fortitude in states that require permits is; is he going to protect the People from rogue statutes and bureaucrats or compromise the Law?

Do you know that all arrest or seizure warrants must have a wet ink signature of a Federal or State Judge (not city, town or village) and supported by an affidavit by the injured party and that without these two requirements cannot execute the warrant and to do so would make you a co-conspirator and in violation of your oath?

Can you discern when the Peoples rights are being violated, when was the last time that you or your deputies arrested an elected, appointed or hired servant for violating their unalienable rights?

We watch video after video on youtube of rights being violated and the Sheriff is not making arrests, why?

Do you know when a video of police brutality, especially when death occurs, turns up on you-tube or the news that the Sheriff can call the Grand Jury and get an indictment, even when the corporate authorities won't?

Why do federal agents file papers without due process in all 3133 counties across America and the Sheriff does nothing?

Why do city, town, and village courts, who do not have subject matter or personam jurisdiction, deliver People to the County Jail and you accept them, when there victims did not get due process as required by the Constitution?

Do you know the difference between Law and statutes?

If you did not know about these things before you know about them now and if you are not bold enough to learn and perform your duties you should resign immediately.

America is a nation that depends on Law and Order to survive and it is the Sheriff that is the defender of Liberty without which we would have no Liberty and I dare to say in the courts We the People have lost our Liberty because the Sheriff does not know the law.

And finally do you know that by remaining ignorant to all or any of these things you are part of the problem and you are in violation of your oath and susceptible to arrest when justice finds its way back into the courts and it will find its way.

If you would like to learn and understand these things and more go to www.PoweroftheCountySheriff.com and we will show you the laws that will empower you to secure Liberty on your watch.

Thank you for your time

We the People

# Columns & Letters

*The comments below are from last issue's story, "Tulare Man Claims PD Brutality", posted on our website.*

"I know this guy very well. He's lying through his teeth. I wouldn't believe a word he says. But the media like s**t like this."

— *Me*

"OK " ME" How did this young man get his so called injury then? and I'm sure melo has a PI on the case and check if the auto place had any cameras , good job valley voice for the reporting on this keep us up dated! on this case!"

— *alex station*

"This isn't the first I have never seen corruption like the tulare PD , we recorded them ileagally towing my car, my bf put the phone into his friends cup holder shut the door and walked to the officer, another officer Guerrero he's a shirt pathetic piece of s**t, then walks up to the friends car says nothing opens the door abs takes the phone !!! They don't care ! I have filed several grievance, there's a Sargent that works at like he's fat Mexican looking but weird last name WS so immature as to say that saying " by Felicia" I turned and said "BYE B***H" lol I have zero respect for the pathetic tulare pd"

— *tiana*

"And yet they will still take a bullet for ya…
Next time call a crack head."

— *Vicki*

"John is not only a master munlipuator he is a drug addict and dealer he was probably high on coke or shrums when this all went down bad mouth and thretted the officer witch is why the cop calld back up he is the only reason that the cops did all they did to him he most likely got pulld over in hus pos red bmw 318 for falty tail lights or reckless driving witch he is vary reckles in that car and he is vary short temperd"

— *Me#2*

"Jonathan is my BROTHER. There's no way he caused this s**t by himself. If you've got some more shit to say, let me know."

— *Shane Smith*

"well then if he is a "master manipulator", then explain the witness there and the poor dog with tazer marks and evidence of pepper spray. don't be idiots and say he's this or that if you weren't there at the time of the incident unless you both are cops that did the brutality or let it go on for the time it occurred and are trying to be sly and cover your names so nobody knows who is running their fat mouths."

— *@ Me #1 & Me #2*

"All I have to say is by law a officers car should be recording at all times. So why not pull up the footage to see what happend…n some of you people saying all this negative stuff should just stop.cause. This could of happend to anyone no matter who you are!! There are ways to figure this out .but nobody should look like tho specially after being pulled over by police ..these people are supposed to protect. Us not cause bodily injury.."

— *Alyssa*

"If your going to stand ups for someone then you also need to know facts about that person. I pray and wish Jonathan happiness in his future. But he has caused the most heartache all by himself. I am not aware of all the facts but it sounds a bit fishy to me. The media only tells you what you want to hear. I'm sure there was a good reason for pulling him over. This is not the first run in with the law for him."

— *Jane*

"He is lying out of his butt out Tulare police put thier lies on the line for ALL of us and they never go after someone unless your breaking the law…in this case you've all heard"law enforcement officers are there to ENFORCE the law" so common sense don't be breaking laws or you will not find yourself in their paths. Just like everyone else job, a tax preparer is there to "do your taxes" and machining is there to "fix your problem" … Get the point!!! So with all the comments from people who say they know him and how he lies…, I wouldn't believe this story but once again there you citizens who believe every freakin thing like" the worlds ending crap" you sit hear and believe a reporter who wasn't physically there, and only goes off of what someone "tells" them… STOP believing the media!!!!!!! That's the problem with our society!!!"

— *Rachel*

"Yeah , and criminals always tell the truth.. I forgot, silly me. Oh and lets not forgot the news, they always report the truth right.. What a load of crap."

— *Vicki*

"Those of you siding with the officers in this situation are strongly misguided.

When did brutality become an acceptable way to detain an unarmed assailant?! There are better ways of taking someone into custody. And regardless of that kids past transgressions, we are ALL innocent until proven guilty.

It's not these officers jobs to be judge, jury, and executioner."

— *unihandroll*

"Cool story bro, but have to call BS! Way too many holes in the story to even be considered semifactual. Here's a novel idea, wait till the investigations done before you show your skills at investigative jurnalism suck. Normally you want to get at least 2 sides of the story, both involved parties and maybe some credible witnesses (the witness statements sounds similar to "hands up, don't shoot)."

— *Um, dude*

"I believe this man I know this man he is not a drug user he doesn't manipulate people so I make sure you get your facts right before you post s**t and I'm not saying all cops are bad but they are some corrupt cops out there"

— *Tv*

"I too know how frustrating it is to have to defend your Good name I had a similar situation not as escalated but having the bad luck if the draw and having to deal with the wrong irresponsible officer at the wrong time mind u I've done academy I know the process and rules for cops and when they step out side their guidelines and into their own rule book they try to ruin a person's good name for their own ego. Luckily Imine wasn't as bad but almost identical on most of it and was just happy that I got a clean record thank god. I hope this kid gets 10 mil outta a lawsuit"

— *Andrew Timmerman*

"Police officers do NOT waste their time harassing people who are doing nothing wrong. OBVIOUSLY this is not the case with Mr. Smith. All critics of cops: you too will not be harassed unless you are exhibiting illegal behavior. Oh, the next time you need a cop, maybe you should rethink such negativity regarding cops."

— *Lucy Mars*

"Actually, "Lucy" the police don't get to "harass" anyone, whether a person is breaking the law or not. They can enforce the law-nothing more. They do not get to decide who gets punished. That is left to juries and the courts.

An officer who takes the law into his/her own hands is a criminal, plain and simple."

— *Quando*

"Why was he trying to be a dumbass and record the incident? All youre gunna do is agitate the officers, the police might have over done it in beating him. But at the same time who's to say he wasnt being a little s**thead anyway? Odds are if youre recording it youre trying to be a smartass with the officer. I dont agree with the beating, but at the same time there are always two sides to a story. This article is only sharing the kid's side of the story. Moral of the story, "be courteous to officers and respect them and they wont have a reason to whoop your ass, even if theyre disrespecting you they are the law. That's the difference between handcuffs and a ticket"

— *Me#3*

"It is our right to record police. We pay them, they work for us. Recording is a safe record because police can legally lie. And 'Yeah Right', police are not the law, they are civil servants to protect us not beat citizens over Traffic CODES."

— *Yeah Right*

"I have seen the Tulare police departments brutality first hand. I am a veteran of the United States of America. We as a country send our son's, daughter's and parent's to fight oppression abroad just to come home to it right.here. The Tulare police department needs to be investigated period. The officers practice oppression on a daily basis. They abuse the shield they hide behind. No unarmed citizens should be brutalized by any peace officer. That is why we have a court system! To punish the guilty that were convicted in a court of law period. If the police officers can not restrain themselves then maybe they need not to be on the force. To serve and protect right!, guilty until proven innocent right, wake up people before it happens to you!"

— *alan*

"Omg!!!!! I know this kid! I've known him for more than 5 years as a customer and i have talked to him here and there around town. He is a super sweet guy. A hard worker. Always polite and friendly. Always smiling and considerate of others. Im shocked!! Seriously shocked and I believe it in my bones this poor kid went through this nightmare. Just because someone has a badge and drives a police car doesn't mean he's not a sociopath or doesn't carry psychological problems that can explode at any given chance. Theres more there lingering beyond the uniform. Police men now and days can be just as dirty as those who roam the streets. Im not saying all of them are, I know very passionate and caring Police officers personally, I just know there is a dark side to some that many fear to believe and are in denial. Just google police brutality just in this year alone and your jaws will drop. Yes, there are 2 sides of the story, but if that was your son, brother, friend,and dog, don't you think they should try to fight back and tell their side of the story, even if they feel singled out? Never stay quiet about these things. Always speak the truth loud and clear, even if the truth is being twisted around. That poor kid and dog."

— *Michael Silva*

# Columns & Letters

"Ugh I'm sorry but this annoys me. Clearly if the officers recorded the whole damn thing they were following protocol, of course this guy's not gonna tell everyone ya resisted arrest or ya I was being a dick and not complying to the officer. Stupid ass got what he deserves"

— *lizzy*

"I'm not going to say the Tulare PD did it or that this young man is lying and provoked it. What I will say that I find strange is this young man said a police car was following behind him and he pulled over even though they didn't have flashing lights on him to ask them if he could help them with something or if there was a problem (something like that). Who does this? Seriously!!! The Tulare PD was doing their job and was patrolling to see if someone was speeding, driving to slow, driving without tags ect. and this young man confronted them, that in itself isn't normal so I think we need to wait until all evidence comes in before we jump the gun and say brutality against the Police Department. Although I don't think he needed worked over either even if he was doing something wrong. Five against one they should have been able to detain him without such bruises."

— *Sunnie*

"When pulled over, always produce license, registration and proof of insurance when asked. Always step out of the car when asked. Cheerfully accept a ticket – it's way better than getting killed, beat up or hauled downtown. The time to contest a ticket is in court."

— *David*

"Folks, look at the known facts. Disorientation, nausea & vomiting? That people is "concusion" with a capitol "C". ie: severe HEAD trauma. No wonder the county released him, they didn't want to be liable for the hospital bills and (potential) future care issues. As for speculation over Tulare PD's (alleged) over-reaction? That is common knowledge among other county law-enforcement agencies. And if you think about it, a not uncommon result in organizations with poor discipline and leadership. Use your heads on this one people. Think cause and effect!"

— *K*

"I do also know this man, and he probably was lying. A million things could have happened. I would hope that they did not hurt the dog (and the dog in the photo looks perfectly fine and uninjured),because there was no reason, but we don't know the whole story and we are only hearing one side. It is completely possible that some douche cop beat him up without reason, but its also completely possible that he is lying and fought back. I will not assume I know and none of you should, either, since you weren't there. Stop assuming the police are the bad guys. Anybody could be in this story."

— *not me*

"I've been a Cop for 26 years & 18 of those years I've worked Internal Affairs, investigating claims such as this. It doesn't matter if allegedly Smith is or was a drug dealer or reckless in whatever form. These are labels and shouldn't waver either way with any of you if what happen is true. Every Law Enforcement agency has a percentage of excessive force. This will never change, because nothing is perfect. I guarantee that Sarsfield & Melo will expose the abuse of authority if it is present."

— *Mr. Mike*

## *The comments below are from last issue's story, "Tulare Man Claims PD Brutality", posted on Facebook.*

"Incredible but it seems to happen quite often all over the country. A way of life, I suppose. You don't argue with the cops!"

— *Enrique Riki Apperley*

"Just hope the video tells what happened so there is not doubt about y things ended up like that."

— *Bryan N Cristina Ruiz*

"There's always 2 sides"

— *GracieandFelix Lara*

"Yup that's y I say wait and see instead of judge off the bat. I just know this bro the traffic officer from VPD treated my wife really bad ,but changed his attitude when I got there. I told my wife maybe he's having a bad day he is human like we are."

— *Bryan N Cristina Ruiz*

"Holy s**t! This story is so vivid and the way it was written it seems the author was there throughout the whole event...but yet he wasn't. Therefore, he's full of s**t. He was extremely liberal with his descriptions and you can definitely see that this article is NOT "fair and impartial" as news reporting should be. This story is completely one sided and the author should consider writing books on fiction because he definitely is very good at it."

— *Art Guerra*

"Well the guy looks pretty jacked up, all kinds of "vivid" going on in that pic."

— *Kelly Benevedes*

"Kelly Benevedes.. maybe if he would have cooperated , it wouldn't gave had to get so "vivid"! I'm sure he's not as innocent as the author portrays this fairy tail!"

— *GracieandFelix Lara*

"We live in the United States not the Middle East. Police can't just beat people who "don't cooperate."

— *Ralph Daniel Enriquez*

"Right.. we live in the United States. . You can't just resist police and think there are no consequences!"

— *GracieandFelix Lara*

"GracieandFelix Lara the consequences are being arrested and being charged. Not getting beat."

— *Ralph Daniel Enriquez*

"If you resist. .. it's a possibility."

— *GracieandFelix Lara*

"Wow, valley voice, disappointed in you for this story. Completely one sided and clearly anti-police. I find it hard to believe this man did nothing. Awful to see your publication jump on the law enforcement bashing bandwagon. I for one won't be reading any longer."

— *Robyn Bruce Leonardo*

"Its not fair to judge this situation. There are two sides to every story. Yes the pictures taken are very damaging and can lead to misinterpretation. Yes we do have some cops that take things to an extreme. But we also have cops who follow rules. Why judge a whole police department for one cop who may have went to the extreme? Our PD is out there risking their lives for us and its not fair to judge based on pictures. I read the comments at the end of the story and there is someone who commented that they knew this guy and has equally damaged his character. So with that being said I can judge and say that this guy was rude and argumentative and was giving the officer a hard time and called out his dog to attack etc.....see how the story can shift once you start adding doubt to a situation.....very unfair article to write without all the facts."

— *Teresa Basquez*

"I didn't read anywhere in this piece that the whole police department was being judged over the misdeeds of one cop, I did read that there are many more incidents and lawsuits filed against the TPD than other PDs in this area. Those are facts that the writer blamed on management (makes sense) Tulare has a history of its police department being corrupt, and if you research the past you would see how serious it can get, no other way to interpret it."

— *Kelly Benevedes*

"Teresa, i have dealt with this individual in the past & i would be willing to stake money on the fact that he was rude & argumentative. He's not got the most clean history & I'm sure the police officer had reason to call for backup. There is most definitely another side to this story."

— *Lisa Stavely*

"Exactly.....thats why i said it wad not fair for this article to be written one sided in his favor. I have lived in Tulare for 15yrs and never had a problem with the police department."

— *Teresa Basquez*

"Hahaha wow, good thing your paper is free guys. By the by, thanks for wasting 10 mins of my life by reading this."

— *Willy Pendleton*

"this is one reason people get so mad at the police! If they have bad officers, fire them!"

— *Carol Knoy*

"It is ignorant to assume that either sides are guilty, since none of those reading this article witnessed this incident. It is not far fetched to believe that this may have happened. Is it possible that this was an obnoxious, disrespectful individual that was out of control? Or that the police used excessive force to arrest this man? Both scenerio's are believable. Until an investigation is made, no conclusion can be assumed.

Police brutality is unacceptable. But the general population needs to be respectful and honor the laws of our land and those that have sworn to uphold it."

— *Jamie Boley*

"I hope justice will be served… Don't misunderstand Jonathan Smith, I meant justice against you."

— *Chelsea Hernandez*

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

**LOCATIONS:**

**Pediatrics**
1186 E Leland
Tulare, CA 93274

**Multi Services**
1203 N Cherry St
Tulare, CA 93274

**IT**
1249 N Cherry St
Tulare, CA 93274

**Administration**
1201 N Cherry St
Tulare, CA 93274

**South Tulare**
3035 E Bardsley Ave
Tulare, CA 93274

**Main Clinic**
1101 N Cherry St
Tulare, CA 93274

**Woodville**
16686 Road 168
Woodville, CA 93257

**West Tulare**
1500 W Tulare Dr
Tulare, CA 93274

Tulare Cor
Health

ALTURA
CENTERS FOR HEALTH
a california health+ center

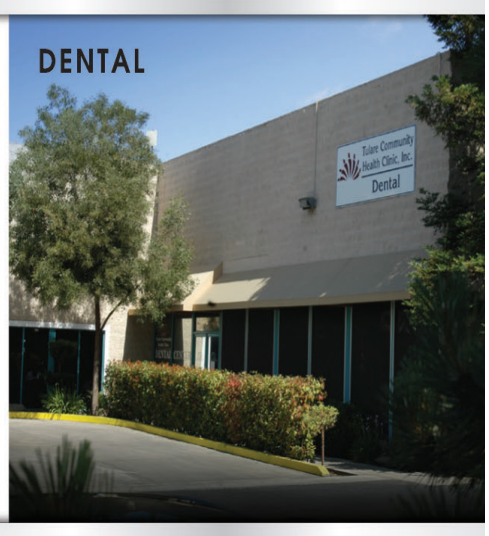
## "Tulare Community Health Clinic" is changing its name to

# "Altura Centers for Health"

- **Same providers, same mission, new name**
- **Effective January 1, 2016**
- **All correspondence and payments will remain the same**
- **New website coming January 1, 2016 www.altura.org**

Tulare Community Health Clinic has been serving our community since July 1, 1998.
The clinic went from 33,898 visits in 1998 to 129,004 visits in 2014.
We have grown from one (1) location to eight (8) locations.
The clinic has outgrown its name and we are excited to announce our change as we continue to serve you with the highest quality of care.

Our clinic remains a non-profit 501 (C) 3 organization/Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC)



COMING SOON! NEW **WEST TULARE LOCATION**

**(559) 686-9097 • ALTURA.ORG**

Valley Voice
# Valley Scene
17 September, 2015

Caitlin McKechney

## Tulare County Symphony Features Latin Music

**Donna Orozco**

The sounds of Latin folk music, rhythms and dance will keep the Visalia Fox Theatre hopping when the Tulare County Symphony performs "Celebración" at 7:30pm on Saturday, October 3.

The most well-known piece is Manuel de Falla's "Three-Cornered Hat," a ballet featuring a variety of Spanish dance music. De Falla is considered to be among the most important Spanish composers of the first half of the 20th Century. He belongs to a generation of composers who no longer imitated Western European music in the style of Beethoven and Brahms but used their countries' folk music and traditions as their inspiration.

The ballet's first performance took place in London in 1919 with stage design, costumes and curtain by another great Spanish artist, Pablo Picasso. It was an immediate success.

The piece includes Spanish folk songs sung by guest soloist Caitlin McKechney. She has been described as "coolly sexy [with an] alluring mezzo soprano timbre, incisive verbal diction, expressive eyes and catlike movements."

"I love singing folk-inspired concert music," she said, "because it combines my two loves of popular music and classical."

Also on the program is music by Alberto Ginastera and José Moncayo.

Ginastera is considered to be among the best known Argentinian composers. His "Estancia Dances" are four dances from his original one-act ballet. Estancia means "cattle ranch." The concluding movement, inspired by the flamboyant malambo dance of the Argentine gauchos, has become one of Ginastera's most popular works.

Moncayo's "Huapango" was premiered in Mexico City in 1941 and was very popular. The work soon became the unofficial second national anthem of Mexico.

Tickets are $30 to $39.50 at the symphony office, 208 W. Main Street, Suite D, Visalia, downstairs in Montgomery Square. Student prices are $10. Tickets are also available at 732-8600 or go to www.tularecountysymphony.com.

The concert begins at 7:30pm, but the audience is invited to attend the pre-concert preview by music director Bruce Kiesling at 5:45pm.

## Tribute Bands, More Included at TC Fair

**Staff Reports**

The 2015 Tulare County Fair opened September 12 and runs through September 20, with music, fun food and five days of free entertainment for fairgoers of all ages – and a newly announced canned food drive, thanks to the local Salvation Army.

Creedence Clearwater Revival tribute band Fortunate Son will perform at 7 and 9pm on Friday. Fandango, a ZZ Top tribute band, will perform at 7 and 9pm on Thursday and Saturday.

Local entertainers perform on community stages throughout the fair, including Midnight Wine, West of Howard, alternative rock band Days Under Authority, duet Miss Lee and Little Ava, and the Ruby Slipper Company, to name a few.

The Budweiser Stage headliners include Kelly Pickler on Thursday, September 17; Foghat, Friday, September 18; Rose Royce, Saturday, September 19; and Marty Stuart, with Aubrie Sellers, on Sunday, September 20. All concerts begin at 8pm and are free with paid gate admission.

Fairgoers who bring at least three cans of food on Sunday, September 20, will receive a 50% discount on admission.

Grounds entertainment, all free with gate admission and offered daily,

**FAIR** continued on **24 »**

## Oktoberfest 2015 Offers Great Entertainment, Food and Drinks

**Staff Reports**

Labor Day is just around the corner and with it, the summer season is almost over. It is time to start thinking about the fall, and there is no better way to welcome the new season than celebrating at Oktoberfest 2015 hosted by the Visalia Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by Budweiser. Building on the success of last year, Oktoberfest will again host live bands, The Patrick Contreras Band, Ryan Dean & the Bricktops, Richfield, and Das Polka Dots amongst the scenic pumpkin patch.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, October 1, 2015 at Vossler Farms, Pumpkin Patch & Corn Maze (26773 S. Mooney) from 5:30 – 9:30pm. Traditionally, Oktoberfest is known for great entertainment, great food and, of course, beer.

"Last year's event was a huge success due in part to event location at Vossler Farms. Having Oktoberfest located at the farm is a great celebration of fall and the harvest." said Todd Mackey, Oktoberfest committee chairman.

Live music is always a big part of the Oktoberfest. This year four bands will be performing throughout the night. Das Polka Dots is a combination of session musicians that have come together to perform traditional German music tailored for this specific event. Ryan Dean & The Bricktops is a local band from Hanford with a blues/rock/soul; almost classic rock feel to it. The Americana Rock Country music of Richfield pulls from traditional American roots songwriters and blends together a sound that now defines them. Following the completion of their first official album titled "High Fences," the band has been performing in an ever-increasing circle of venues and music festivals.

This year's event headliner is the Patrick Contreras Band. Born and raised in Fresno, Patrick Contreras has branded his style of playing with influences of Hip Hop, Mariachi, Rock, Soul, Jazz, Electronic and Classical to become one of Visalia's rising stars with a completely unique sound. Patrick thrills audiences wherever he goes with his original music and explosive interpretations of Jimi Hendrix.

This year Oktoberfest will be emceed by actor Glenn Heath. Heath is originally from Visalia, having graduated from Mt. Whitney in 1988. For 25 years Glenn has been performing on the stage and on screen. He's worked on more than 25 feature films, numerous commercials and has had more than 1,000 live Comedy Improv performances. Currently residing in Las Vegas, Heath has performed in a number of Vegas Strip Shows at Excalibur, Bally's, the Hilton, the Plaza, Palace Station, Silverton and Bourbon Street Casinos.

General admission tickets for Oktoberfest are $35 (advance purchase) or $40 the day of the event. Ticket admission includes live entertainment food tastings and a mug for beer and wine tasting.

Tickets can be purchased at:

- Ashoori & Co. Jewelers 4212 S. Mooney Blvd.
- Cellar Door - 101 W Main St.
- Details Party Rentals - 3809 N. Mooney Blvd, Tulare
- IDEA! Printing & Graphics - 1921 E Main St.
- Rabobank - 618 W Main St.
- Rabobank - 3443 S. Mooney Blvd.
- Velouria Records - 109 E Main St.
- Visalia Music School - 2332 W Whitendale St. B
- Visalia Chamber of Commerce - 222 N. Garden St. Suite 300

Tickets may be purchased on line at http://tinyurl.com/oktoberfest2015

If you would like your restaurant or brewery to be an Oktoberfest participant call the Chamber of Commerce at 559-734-5876. Business sponsorships and vendor booths are available now.

For more information on this event, call the Visalia Chamber at (559)734-5876 or go to www.visaliachamber.org.

## Art League and Arts Visalia Welcome Internationally Renowned Illustrator

The Visalia Art League and Arts Visalia continue the Artist Lecture Series with internationally renowned illustrator, Leonard Filgate, on Saturday September 26.

During the presentation, Filgate will display several paintings from his children's books. He will discuss his personal artistic inspirations and references used to create his imaginative paintings.

Born in San Francisco, Filgate's

**ILLUSTRATOR** continued on **19 »**

# Education

## County Fares Poorly in Common Core Testing

**Dave Adalian**

The first results from the newly-adopted state proficiency tests are in, and there's plenty of room for improvement locally and across the state.

Results for the entire area of Tulare County were less than encouraging, with 67% of the 60,596 students tested not meeting the English language arts and literature standard. A whopping 78% tested below the standard in math. While Tulare County fell short of the state averages, the problem is not only local. Statewide, 56% of students did not meet the English standards, and 66% were below par in math.

### No Surprises

Local educators are not surprised, though they are concerned.

"I don't think we're ever satisfied with the results," said Craig Wheaton, superintendent of the Visalia Unified School District. "We always want our kids to achieve higher. We got about what we expected."

The tests -- the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress or CAASPP -- are based on the Common Core Standards adopted statewide in 2010, and were administered to all students for the first time this year. Common Core focuses on critical thinking, problem solving and analysis. This year's results will serve as a baseline for assessing future change.

### At the Bottom

Among the county's larger school districts, Farmersville and Woodlake's showed the poorest results. In the Farmersville Unified School District, 79% of students failed to meet the language standards, while 90% were not proficient in arithmetic. Woodlake Union Elementary School District students were also only 10% proficient at math, and 87% were below standard in language arts. Woodlake's high school students did little better, with 71% below proficiency in English and 86% not making the math mark.

### At the Top

Visalia and Tulare schools led the pack countywide.

"I think a couple of things do pop up in the baseline," Wheaton said. "We're relatively close to the state average as a starting point. That's not a bad place to start. I think you'll see us excel there for sure."

The tests for junior high and high school math, he said, were particularly difficult. In the Tulare Joint Union High School District, 75% did not meet the standard in math. Results were similar for that city's elementary students, with 76% below grade. VUSD had 71% of its students not at the math standard. Among Visalia's 11th-graders, the only grade tested at the high school level, just 52% did not meet the math standard.

"The area that's tough for everybody is math," Wheaton said. "We had a little more of a gap, and I believe we can easily move forward and close that gap."

### District-by-District

Results were uniformly grim across the county. Exeter Union School District had the county's best combined language result, with 63% still below proficiency. Just 23% of its students were able to make the grade in math.

In Lindsay, 75% didn't make the cut for languages, while 87% were not math proficient. Nearby Porterville fared better, with 71% below standard in English and 80% not up to speed in mathematics. Tulare's elementary students missed the English standards at a 71% rate, and the city's high school students, who had the single best result for any group in the county for either test, didn't make the standard at a 46% rate.

### Still in the Game

The results, as provided by the state Department of Education, allow a deep disaggregation of the data by student type. The results are also available county-by-county, district-by-district and school-by-school. That ability to compare areas and groups of students is particularly useful, said Wheaton, and encouraging.

"I look at other districts and see where we are," he said. "We're in the game. We're not out in left field on anything."

The results will provide a guidepost for educators, helping identify areas of strength and weakness, and helping explain why our students aren't meeting the standards.

"All of this is essential info we need to move forward," said a hopeful Wheaton. "We'll have a global view. It's just a starting point. I'd love to be at the top of the scores."

### Results Reflect Reality

The area's poor results reflect the area's demographics. The US Census Bureau reports just 68% of the county's residents are high school graduates, compared to 81.2% of all Californians. Just 13.3% of county residents hold a four-year or better college degree, compared to 30.7% statewide.

The test results, Wheaton believes, reflect the lifestyle of the people who live here more than the quality of the education system.

"We have, I think, great teachers here and we've always done really well," he said. "We start with an adult population that is one of the lowest educated in the nation. That's not because we're not doing the job in K-12. We have a lot of folks who here who move here for the work."

Still, the onus is on educators to improve the scores, he said.

"We have to do our part to raise that level," Wheaton said. "I'm ready to go."

## Spacks Prize Goes to PC's Hodges

**Staff Reports**

Gunpowder Press announced September 2 that Porterville College Language Arts Professor Catherine Hodges is the winner of the inaugural Barry Spacks Prize for Poetry. Hodges's *Instead of Sadness* stood out among nine finalists.

Catherine Hodges

Hodges stated that most of her poems investigate an image or an idea and tend to be more lyric than narrative. *Instead of Sadness* is a collection of poems that Hodges said relates to the "strangeness and wonder of being alive; about how brief our time is and about the piercingly mysterious companionship of beauty and sorrow."

The book will be printed by Gunpowder Press this year.

The Barry Spacks Prize for Poetry is awarded on an annual basis.

For more information visit http://gunpowderpress.com/spacks-prize-award-to-catherine-hodges/

## Solar Savings Exceed Measure E Projections

The on-campus solar projects included in Measure E, passed by Visalia Unified School District voters in November 2012, were expected to generate about $500,000 in energy savings each year.

According to the newest report, the solar projects actually saved $506,188 in energy costs during the 2014-2015 fiscal year, and generated a rebate of $446,119 for a total of $952,307.

Solar panels have been installed at 12 school sites, thanks to Measure E, and the school district now has a full year of data to consider, explained Robert Groeber, assistant superintendent of administrative services.

"We are very pleased to be able to report that the systems exceeded expectations," Groeber noted.

The first phase of solar involved Crowley, Fairview, Highland, Houston, Ivanhoe, Linwood, Pinkham, Veva Blunt and Golden Oak schools; Green Acres and La Joya middle schools; and Redwood High School.

"We received the savings that were projected and the district will continue to see the savings into the future," Groeber noted. "Thanks to this success, the board was able to authorize additional solar projects, with the intent to have solar on every campus in our district."

A second wave of solar installations is nearly complete at Mountain View, Royal Oaks, Washington, Charter Alternatives Academy, Visalia Learning Center and the Operations Center. These are not E funded – and are instead funded through Prop 39.

The Waiter's Race features a variety of restaurants. Photo courtesy Greg Halliwill.

# Visalia Waiter's Race Open for Registration

**Staff Reports**

Join the Breakfast Lions Club for another exciting Waiter's Race taking place on Main Street, Thursday September 24. Servers from various local restaurants compete for prizes and bragging rights. Men and women racers are wanted.

The Visalia's Waiters Race, an incredible night in Downtown Visalia. Enjoy the parade of racers at 5:15 with the main event starting promptly at 5:45pm. Come cheer your favorite waiters and waitresses as they compete for big prizes!

Registration is open now till 4pm race day. To register for the 22nd Annual Waiters Race visit www.waitersrace.net.

Entry's just $25 per racer and there is $7,000 in prizes awarded for Full and Quick Service categories. All valley servers are welcome.

Race sponsors include: Visalia Breakfast Lions Club, Budweiser, Sequoia Beverage, Groppetti Automotive, Kaweah Delta Health Care District, A&W, Valley Business Bank, Vintage Press Restaurant, The Southern Pacific Depot, Jack & Charlie's, Le Boulevard, StepUp Program and Downtown Visalians.

There will be no parking on Main Street between 2-8pm on race day. Please use the parking garage just to the south of Garden St. Plaza.

# Arts Consortium: A Call to Artists

**Staff Reports**

There are still opportunities for artists to participate in the Taste the Arts festival.

The sixth annual Taste the Arts festival, presented by the Arts Consortium, returns on Saturday, October 17 and promises to offer something for everyone including more than 70 artist booths, performances, interactive family activities, workshops and demonstrations. With generous sponsors, the event is kept free to the public.

## Call to Artists

This unique festival is the area's biggest annual celebration of artistic diversity and cultural heritage of the Central Valley. The street fair features artists in a variety of mediums including: authors, sculptors, painters, fabric artists and photographers. Limited booth space is still available for artists and applications may be found at http://artsconsortium.org/tastethearts.

The Arts Consortium is also accepting entries for the Taste the Arts Floral Design Contest. All Central California residents are invited to create a floral design that embodies the theme of Taste the Arts which celebrates all art forms in Tulare County, including theatre, music, visual arts and our distinct agricultural heritage. Floral designs will be judged on site during the festival and will be eligible to win a $500 cash for 1st place, $300 cash prize for 2nd place, and $200 cash prize for 3rd place.

The winner will be selected by the Taste the Arts Committee. The floral designs are judged on the following criteria: quality of design, creativity and originality of the artwork, and use of theme. Floral arrangements are showcased under a tent in a central part of the festival, so the public may enjoy the arrangements for the duration of the event.

For more information on artist opportunities, call the Arts Consortium at 559-802-3266 or visit their website at artsconsortium.org.

# Illustrator

Continued from p. 17

professional art career began at age 16 when he sold his first painting. As a child, Filgate would roam the streets of San Francisco on bicycle, spending hours in art museums and exploring Golden Gate Park observing all his eyes could absorb. After high school, his art career was put on hold for five years while he served in the United States Merchant Marines.

In 1970, Filgate returned to his self-study of art and embarked on a lifelong career as an artist and illustrator. He has created commissioned works for private individuals, several projects for the US Navy, reproductions of Japanese screens, props for a Warner Bros. Television series, theatrical backdrops, and storyboards. In 1997, he began work on the creation of illustrations for the Rip Squeak project and continued developing and painting in that theme, until 2007, at which time he chose to explore other avenues with his art and illustration.

His originals and prints (over 40 editions) have been sold in numerous US art galleries and can be found in private and public collections throughout the world. Filgate has been refining his art for more than 30 years. It has long been his philosophy that art imitate the best in life, whether it be from reality or from deep within our imagination.

"Art should be an oasis in a chaotic world, an elixir that will bring a smile to our soul," he revealed.

The presentation will take place from 3-5pm at Arts Visalia, 214 E. Oak St.

# Calendar

**VENDOR ALERT SPACE AVAILABLE:**
The 30th annual Holiday Bazaar sponsored by the Three Rivers Senior League will be Saturday, November 14th, 9am to 4pm. The event is held at the Three Rivers Memorial Building. Vendor spaces are $25.00 for outside and $30 for the inside. For further information please call Mo Basham 561-4988 or email wildirish57att.net

**Mondays: Bridge Club, 9:30am-2pm**
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291 Admission is free. For additional information call: Joan Dinwiddie @ 732-0855

**Mondays: Knitters, 10am-12:30pm**
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. Everyone's welcome.

**Fridays: Women's Morning Bible Study, 9am-Noon**
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. For additional information call: 739-9010

**Saturdays starting August 22: Dog Obedience Course, 9-10am**
6-week Basic Manner course, Exeter City Park. $120/6-week-course. For more information, call (559) 568-8863 or email fortheloveofdg@doglover.com.

**1st and 3rd Wednesdays: MOPS meeting, 9-11am**
The Tulare Mothers of Preschoolers--MOPS--will be meeting the first and third Wednesday of each month at the Tulare First Baptist Church gym from 9am to 11am. Childcare is provided. There are some costs for attending. For contact information Leslie Elliott is the President her telephone number is (916) 223-1101. This is open to anyone they do not have to attend church.

**1st and 3rd Thursdays: Central Valley Tea Party Meetings, 6pm**
819 West Visalia Road, Farmersville.

**Through October 28: Free Fly Casting Instruction, 6-7pm**
Kaweah Fly Fishers are offering fly casting lessons at Del Lago Park in Tulare every Wednesday evening until October 28. Rods and reels will be supplied or you may bring your own.

## SEPTEMBER

**September 17-22: American Association of University Women Book Sale, Regular Mall Hours**
The annual AAUW book sale at Sequoia Mall will be in September instead of October. There will NOT be a preview night on the evening before the sale. Prices will vary this sale and there will be some special offers on books. 100% of the profit made goes to scholarships for local students.

**September 17: Effective Negotiations Workshop, 3-6pm**
This workshop will include:

Understanding contracts - fixed time and material; Common negotiated Areas; What is the Business Objective- long term versus short term profits. To register for this Workshop contact the Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at (559) 734-6020 or to armondo@mytkhcc.org

**September 17: Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber Mixer, 5:30-7:30pm**
The menu will include tri-tip, chili, and cornbread. Raffle prizes. All donations and proceeds go to the National Alzheimer's Association. For more information call Deb Spurlock at 735-0828.

**September 19: Security Self Storage Annual Yard Sale, 7am**
No early birds please. Come enjoy some food and music while you shop. New Rock 104.1 will be giving away prizes. Animal Adoption Booth Sponsored by Valley Oak SPCA. 20+ vendors to shop from. Furniture, Clothes, Toys, Electronics & MUCH more. 6601 W. Goshen Avenue, Visalia. For more information, call 559-625-1015.

**September 19: Mothers United Against Gang Violence Car Show, 7am**
Mothers United Against Gang Violence will be having their very first ANNUAL CAR SHOW on Saturday - SEPTEMBER 19th 2015. Sign-in time will start at 7am under the Big Time Clock on Main Street and Cleveland Ave. in Porterville. Registration is $25 at the door. Trophies and plaques will be announced at 12:00 or thereabouts. Music, entertainment and food vendors will be at the event.

**September 19: 5K For Care; Superheroes Saving Lives, 7am-Noon**
Join Care Pregnancy Resource Center for the 2nd annual 5K For Care; Superheroes Saving Lives! Kids Fun Run begins at 7:30 am; cost is $10/per child. 5K Walk/Run begins at 8:00 am. Cost is $25/per entry before September 4th. $30 thereafter. Sign up before September 4th to guarantee a race shirt! Chapala Grill will be on site selling breakfast burrito's for $6.00 and live music by DJ Johnny Bhoy will be featured! To register, please go to our website and follow the 5K for Care Link.

**September 19: Take a Bite out of Hunger Poker Run, 8:30am-3pm**
Tulare Emergency Aid's 2nd Annual Take a Bite out of Hunger Poker Run Ride your Bike or Drive you Car... To provide additional funding to assist families with food, rent/mortgage assistance, and emergency shelter. Due to the California drought, more new families are coming to us for assistance. Cash payouts for Best/Worst Hands Will have silent auction.

**Registration and Poker Run Start - Tulare Emergency Aid - 424 North N Street - Tulare**
Registration 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. Free Donuts and coffee. Contacts - Art Cabello - 901-5729 John Avila - 779-1106 or call Tulare Emergency Aid - 585-3693. Solo - $25 (includes lunch) Passenger - $10 BBQ lunch only $8

**September 19: Porterville Park & Leisure Punt, Pass & Kick, 9:30 am-Noon**
Young pro football fans will have the opportunity to exhibit their football skills when Porterville Parks and Leisure hosts a NFL Punt, Pass & Kick competition at the Porterville Sports Complex. The competition is free and open to boys and girls ages 6-15.The NFL Punt, Pass and Kick program is a national skills competition for boys and girls with over 200,000 youngsters participating each year nationwide. The local competition will take place inside the Sports Complex at 2701 W. Scranton Ave. Registration begins at 9:30am and participants can compete anytime between 10am and noon. For more information on the Punt, Pass & Kick program visit www.nflppk.com. For more information about the local competition contact Parks and Leisure Services at (559) 791-7695 or check out the City of Porterville website.

**September 19: Handmade and Homegrown Craft Fair, 10am-4pm**
Handmade and Homegrown Craft Fair brought to you by The Looking Glass, on the corner of Caldwell and Garden in the Whites Music Shopping Center. We have more than 35 vendors featuring their handmade goods. Jewelry, Children's Boutique Clothing and Accessories, Wood and Wire Crafts Birdhouses, Handmade Soaps, Fine Art and Photography, Local Honey and Jams, Up-cycled and Repurposed Décor, furniture and so much more! The Visalia Rescue Mission will be there with a truck to take any donation, large or small! Visit us on the web at thelookingglassvisalia.com or contact the store at 242 E Caldwell 559.732.2787

**September 19: Women's Self Defense Class with David Unger Karate, 10am**
The cost is $60 per person, ages 15+. Persons under the age of 18 need parent/guardian consent. Classes are held at 137 N E Street in Exeter. Office only open during class hours. For further information, call (559) 802-8208 or email davidu-gojuryu@yahoo,com.

**September 19: Wish Upon A Star Bravefest, Noon-3pm**
California Law Enforcement hosts Shave the Brave and its third annual Chili Bean Cook-off at the Garden Street Plaza in Visalia. There will be live music, family activities, face painting, bounce houses, Disney characters, a beer garden, raffle, and informational booths. Free admission.

**September 19: Blues & Roots Festival, 5:30-10pm**
The blues are alive and well in downtown Hanford and this special event boasts live blues entertainers in Civic Park. Enjoy the music, dance under the harvest moon and dine under the stars at this admission free event at the Hanford Civic Auditorium, 400 North Douty Street, Hanford.

**September 19: Joan Jett in Concert, 7:30pm**
Joan Jett performs at the Visalia Fox Theatre. Tickets $50-$100. Call 625-1369 or visit www.foxvisalia.org.

**September 20: 11th Annual Garden Party Wine Affair, 4-7pm**
The Cellar Door hosts a wine tasting to support the Green Acres Little Theatre Foundation. Hors d'oeuvres by Fugazzi's, the Vintage Press, Tazzaria and others. Tickets are $30 in advance or $35 at the door at 2205 Hyde Way in Visalia. For more information, call 739-1449.

**September 20: Raise the Roof BBQ, 4:30-7pm**
Tri-tip and chicken will be on the grill at the Tulare County Museum in Mooney Grove as the Tulare County Historical Society hosts a BBQ fundraiser to raise a new roof for the recently restored Visalia Electric Railroad Caboose. Sons of the San Joaquin will provide the music. Tickets are $45. For more information call 799-1164.

**September 23: Life Skills Learning Center Open House Awards Night, 5-6pm**
The public is invited to this free event. Life SkillsLearning Center is a day activity program of ABLE Industries, Inc. and provides functional skills and community integration training to adults with disabilities. ABLE Industries, Inc. has been in operation for over 50 years and serves nearly 300 individuals with disabilities in Tulare County. Three community members will be recognized for their efforts in advocating for individuals with disabilities. An employee of the North Visalia Target Store, will be presented an Outstanding Hospitality Award for her exceptional customer service to adults with disabilities. Other awards will include the Central Valley Regional Center Counselor of the Year and Care Provider/Parent of the Year Awards, the recipients of which will be announced at the event. We will also recognize various achievements and personal growth of some of our program participants. The event will begin at 5pm with a staff meet-and-greet where guests will have the opportunity to tour the facility and enjoy some refreshments. The awards ceremony will follow at 5:30pm. Life Skills Learning Center is located at 2544 East Valley Oaks Drive, Visalia. Parents of students enrolled in special day classes in Tulare County are encouraged to attend this event. ABLE Industries wishes to thank the community for its continued support. For more information contact Mark Michaelian at (559) 651-8150 ext 250.

**September 24: Veterans' Services Open House, 4-6pm**
Join San Joaquin Valley veterans at 410 East 7th Street in Hanford.

**September 24: Waiters Race, 5pm**
Servers from local restaurants compete for prizes and prestige, hosted by the Breakfast Lions Club. After a parade at

5pm, the races start at 5:45pm on Visalia's Main Street, between Court and Garden Streets. Free for spectators. $25 early entry fee, $30 after September 22. For more information call 730-1808.

**September 24: Wellness & You--Shoulder & Sports Medicine, 5:30-6:30pm**
Speakers Bruce Le, D. O., and Angela Duran, PT, CLT, will give a talk at the Exeter Courthouse Art Gallery & Museum, 125 S. B Street. For more information call 624-2463.

**September 25: Crush Party, 5:30-8pm**
The Tulare Chamber of Commerce & COS Foundation collaborate to host a wine tasting event that provides funds for additional enhancements of the Tulare COS Campus and the Tulare Chamber educational programs. A collection of 109 select bottles of wine will be the grand prize raffled off during the event. COS Tulare College Center, Building B 4999 E Bardsley Avenue, Tulare. Tickets are $50 per person. Raffle tickets for 109 select bottles of wine are $20.

**September 26: Mavericks Pony Express 5K Run, 7:30am**
Mavericks Coffee House & Roasting Company proudly presents its annual 5K Run with all proceeds benefitting Happy Trails Riding Academy. It will be held Saturday, September 26, 2015 at Happy Trails, 2773 E. Oakdale Avenue (Ave 256) in Tulare. Start times for three events are – Kids Race (10 yrs of age and younger) at 7:30 a.m.; Walkers at 7:45 a.m.; and Runners at 8:00 a.m. Registration fee is $30 for advance registration or $35 on race day. Kids 'Fun Run" registration is $10. Breakfast will be served and shirts will be provided for all 5K walkers and runners. Chip timing will be provided and monitored. Awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place will be presented for each age group in addition to first overall male and first overall female runners.

**September 26: Car Show, 8am-2pm**
Wander through over 100 classic cars and trucks while listening to 50's &60's music. Purchase a raffle ticket, or two, for a Restored Antique Gas Pump along with other prizes. BBQ lunch available for purchase along with waters and soft drinks. A&W Root Beer Float Truck will be on site. For the ladies we have a full vendor area of Jewelry, Clothing, Accessories, Handbags and more. Bring the kids! We will have a play area to occupy the children while you shop, eat and admire. All proceeds benefit the Calvary Kids Bible Clubs. We are located East of Mooney Blvd at 11720 Ave 264 Visalia, Ca.

**September 26: Annual Visalia High School Multi-Class Picnic, 11:30am-4:30pm**
In Mooney Grove Park, Arbors 14, 15, 16. Attendees are asked to bring their favorite potluck dish to share and have it in place by 11:30am as dining will begin at noon. Also bring their own table service and beverage as well as a comfortable lawn chair. Come and join your classmates and friends from the classes of 1948 through 1954. Each year there are about 400 former classmates that attend and have an opportunity to renew friendships of those from the other classes. Additional information is available from your class picnic representative:

1948----627-3996
1949----686-1639
1950----733-3201
1951----732-3734
1952----683-5336
1953----732-3734
1954----732-8502

**September 26: 8th Annual Lindsay Brewfest, 2-6pm**
At Sweet Brier Plaza: $35 advance tickets, $40 at the door. Music and food included.Tickets available at Virginia's Hair Studio, Tony's Pizza, McDermont Field House, Fat Boyz, The Orange Bar, Brewbakers in Visalia.

**September 26: Tulare County Republican Party Lincoln Dinner, 5-9pm**
Keynote speaker will be Iowa Senator Joni Ernst. Other special guests include: Congressman Kevin McCarthy; Congressman Devin Nunes; Congressman David Valadao; State Senator Jean Fuller; State Senator Andy Vidak; Assemblyman Jim Patterson; Assemblyman Devon Mathis. To purchase tickets or for more information call 559-359-7532.

**September 26: Sequoia Union Annual Fall Carnival, 5:30-9pm**
Sequoia Union's annual fall carnival is 5:30-9pm Saturday, Sept. 26 on campus, 23958 Avenue 324 in Lemon Cove. Come out and enjoy carnival games, a delicious dinner, bingo and a silent auction, all the while supporting student learning. For more information, call 564-2106 or email ptc@sequoiaunion.org.

**September 28: EHS for Leaders, Managers and Supervisors, 11:30am-1:30pm**
Boretti, Inc. invites you to attend an informative presentation on EHS For Leaders, Managers, and Supervisors. What you will learn at this session: • How to link safety objectives with business objectives • How safety contributes to the business • Integrating safety activities within operational activities • Efficiently managing the safety process • How to measure the safety process' contribution to the goals of the organization. Speaker: James Boretti, CSP. At Marie Callender's Banquet Room ,350 S. Mooney Blvd. in Visalia. Attendee Fee: $50.00 per person (Meal included) Pay at the door by cash or check made payable to Boretti, Inc.

**September 28: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm**
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: TBA—poetry?

**September 28: Pizza with a Purpose, 5-9pm**
Enjoy a great meal & support a great cause! Every #lastmonday of the month in 2015. The Planing Mill will donate a portion of the evening's revenue to the VRM.

**September 29: Wellness & You--Total Knee Replacement, 5:30-6:30pm**
Burton Redd, M.D. will give a talk at the Claude Meitzenheimer Community Center, 830 Blackstone Street in Tulare. For more information call 624-2463.

**September 30: Ombudsman – How Does the Program Work? 10:30-11:30am**
Quail Park Retirement Village Workshop invites the community to attend this free workshop and learn more about the federal mandated program that emphasizes dignity and determination

in its efforts to improve the quality of life for residents in long term care facilities. For additional information or to make your reservations, please call the community relations office at 559-624-3503. Quail Park Retirement Village is located at 4520 W. Cypress Avenue, Visalia, CA 93277.

# OCTOBER

**October 1st until October 30th: Exeter's Scarecrow Contest**
Scarecrows are returning to Exeter!! This year's theme is "Storybook Scarecrows." For the entire month of October Exeter Chamber of Commerce Businesses & Organizations will line the charming streets of Exeter with artistic, creative & lively scarecrows that will be sure to delight locals & visitors alike!! Promote your business & increase foot traffic by creating your own scarecrow or adopt one to show in your business! Register your scarecrow with the Chamber by September 18th. You will be assigned a voting number to attach to your scarecrow upon submitting a completed application. Registration fee is $10. Winning Scarecrows will be selected both by a panel of judges & by popular vote of visitors and locals. Judges favorite will receive a trophy & a color 1/4 page ad in 2016 Experience Exeter Magazine. Popular vote winner will receive a perpetual trophy & a color 1/4 page size ad in the magazine.

**October 1: Oktoberfest, 5:30-9:30pm**
Food tasting, live music, beer and wine at Vossler Farms pumpkin patch, 26773 South Mooney Blvd., Visalia. Admission for this 21+ events is $35 in advance, $40 the day of.

**October 2: The Annual Lemon Cove Women's Club Yard Sale, 8am**
The annual Lemon Cove Women's Club yard sale will be Friday, October 2nd and Saturday October 3rd beginning at 8:00am. No early birds. This is a huge sale including everything from furniture, office supplies, appliances to holiday decorations and crafting items. Outside vendors will be selling their antiques (not including the club's members!) Funds raised go to maintaining the historic Pogue Hotel right on Highway 198 past the Lemon Cove Fire Station. To donate items please call Mary Cloud 597-1416 or Mona Wyatt 359-4465.

**October 2: Annual Round Up Fundraiser, 6pm**
Happy Trails Riding Academy is hosting its 5th Annual Round Up fundraiser Friday, October 2, 2015 at the Happy Trails Riding Academy facility located at 2773 E. Oakdale Avenue, Tulare. A ticket will include a Cowboy BBQ, live music, a wine buy and rider demonstrations. All proceeds of the event will directly benefit the Happy Trails Riding Academy program. Tickets are $30 per person and tables of eight can be reserved for $240. Happy Trails also has sponsorship opportunities available for this event. To reserve your tickets or inquire about sponsorships, please contact the office at (559) 688-8685. Happy Trails Riding Academy is a non-profit program that enriches the lives of children and adults with physical, mental and emotional disabilities through therapeutic horsemanship, providing a unique opportunity for self-improvement and independence while offering a challenging alternative to traditional therapy. If you would like more information, please contact Leslie Gardner at (559) 688-8685 or Leslie@WeAreHappyTrails.com.

**PLAYING NEXT at THE ENCHANTED PLAYHOUSE!**
**"TREASURE ISLAND" - Directed by Donald Williams**
**October 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 2015**
Based on the masterful adventure novel by Robert Louis Stevenson Treasure Island is a stunning yarn of piracy on the tropical seas. This unforgettable tale of treachery and mayhem features a host of legendary swashbucklers including the dangerous Billy Bones, the sinister two-timing Israel Hands, the brassy woman pirate Anne Bonney, and the hide...ous evil Blind Pew. At the center is 14 year old Jim Hawkins a boy longing for adventure & the infamous pirate, Long John Silver. Silver's greedy quest for gold is coupled with his affection for Jim. This tale cannot help to win your heart!

Information
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http://www.enchantedplayhouse.org/ticketing/index.html

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# Sports

## Rawhide Players Take Chemistry into Postseason

**Stefan Barros**

The Rawhide won the first two games of the Northern Division playoffs against the San Jose Giants at home, Sunday night with one game left to clinch the Division.

If the Rawhide clinch the series, it will be on to the California League Finals for the second year in a row, starting Thursday, September 17.

There have been many contributions to the Rawhide's success this year, and two of their biggest standouts have been starting pitcher Anthony Banda, and outfielder Daniel Palka. Banda and Palka have been with the Rawhide for the entire season and have served as consistent performers all season long, while hoping to do the same in the postseason.

Anthony Banda

Banda, who came to the Rawhide from the Milwaukee Brewers organization in July, 2014, is very grateful for the way that the Diamondbacks handle their minor league players, and the way they are prepared for success going forward.

"They put you in the best position to win," he said. "They teach players to be respectful and it shows on the field with the success we had."

Being that this was Banda's first full season in the Diamondbacks' organization, he was looking to make a good impression with his team. That he did, and he believes his success has just come from knowing the hitters he is facing.

"I learned to understand hitters; finding their holes and weaknesses; knowing the pitches to throw that they can't hit," he said. "I also started to learn how to get deep as possible into games and put the team in a position to win by pitching to contact."

Banda also credits the work being done when not on the mound, saying that the discussions he has with coaches about hitters has paid dividends.

"We would have meetings to talk about hitters and go over each hitter's tendencies," he said. "And it was there that I learned I need to be consistent staying down in the strike zone."

On the other side, Palka talked a little bit about what has worked so well for him and what he has done this season to help himself lead the Rawhide with 29 home runs.

"Just having a daily routine and doing early hitting, early fielding," he said, "I would just stay on that same routine all season."

With the California League being known as hitting friendly, Palka talked a little about whether or not that may have had an effect on his team this year.

"I think it had an effect on home runs," he said. "But the base hits would've been hits anywhere. But, I mean, every league is different. I hit in the Midwest League last year and it's friendly to hitters. In the end baseball is baseball."

Daniel Palka

The Rawhide have had the best record in the California League for just about every day of the season, and Banda discussed when he saw the team click as a whole.

"Early on in spring when we didn't know what level we were going, I just had a lot of fun with the guys," he said. "Meeting new guys was great, and the chemistry was great during spring. We started clicking as team at the beginning. Everyone had each other backs. This team picks each other up. We lose as a team and we win as a team.

"Everybody is pulling for everybody on this team," he said. "We all support each other. But we also get on each other too. People will talk to you if you do something wrong. We usually keep it as a team thing though and let the players handle it amongst ourselves."

After winning the first half of the season in the CAL league, the Rawhide did not take their feet off the gas pedal, according to Banda.

Manager J.R. House would not let the team become complacent after achieving a goal in the first half, Banda said.

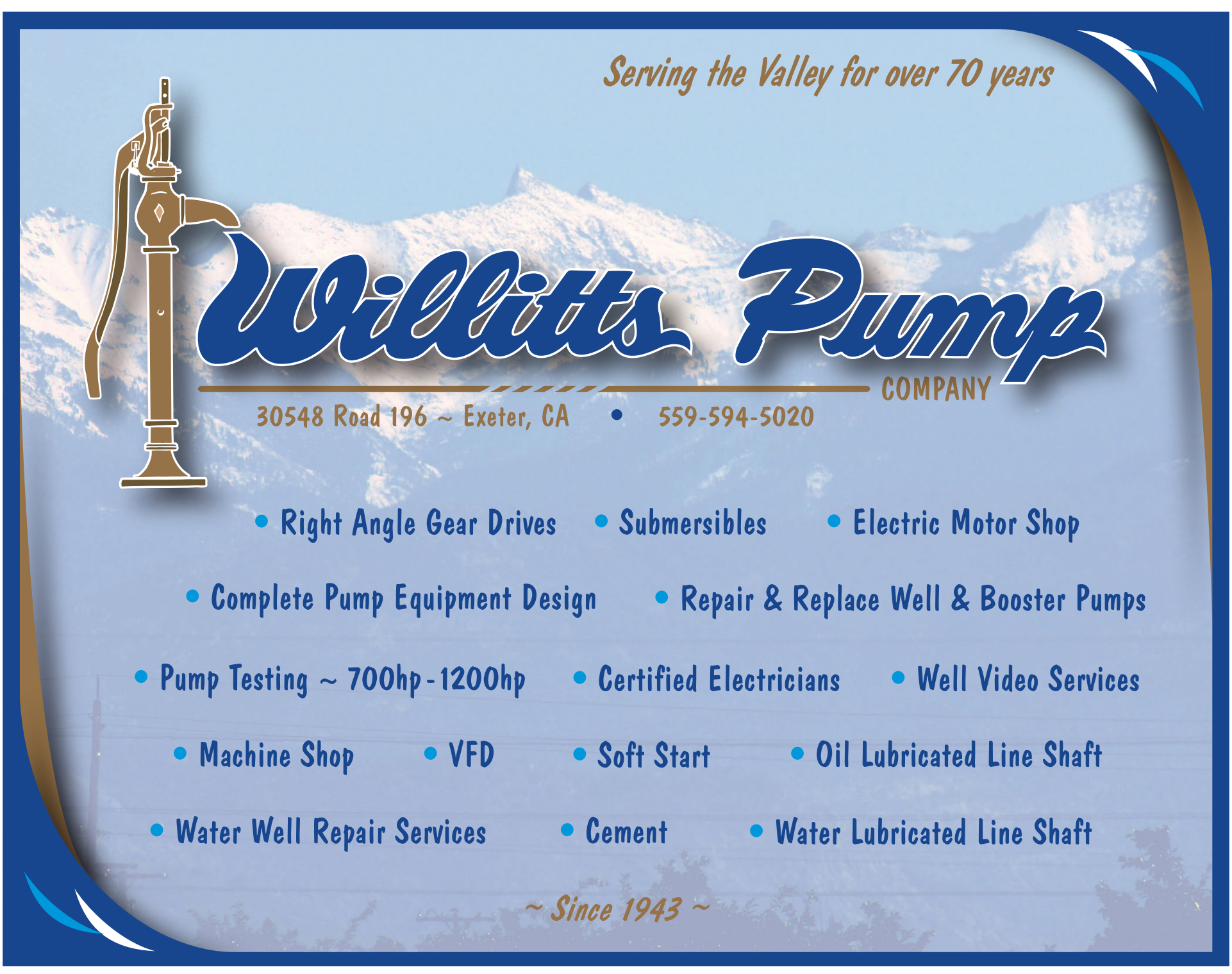
"In the second half we needed to continue to have each other's backs, our manager wouldn't let us be satisfied and we continued to find something to get better at," he said. "That pushed us to winning the second half as well."

Palka also talked about the team's "state of mind" after winning the second half.

"We started off the second half bunched up with some other teams, but we just had to keep on playing," he said. "You have goals you need to meet in a season.

"We always expected to be where we are right now. Maybe some scouts were surprised that we all put it together as a team. These guys have been together in previous seasons and we've really relied on each other, and it's just all come together."

> "Baseball is ninety percent mental and the other half is physical."
> Yogi Berra



# Tulare Western Mustangs Looking For a Strong Season

**Stefan Barros**

The 2015 Tulare Western football team hopes to go a couple of steps further than the 2013 and 2014 versions. Coming off back-to-back 7-4 seasons and losing in the playoffs, Head Coach Ryan Rocha wants his team to finish out the season strong and be able to win in the playoffs.

Rocha, who is in his third season at the helm for the Mustangs, believes that in past years, the team has put too much emphasis on winning the Bell Game against Tulare Union, and forget that there is another game after; in the playoffs.

"We have to learn to finish the job," he said. "The last two years we've come within a game of winning the EYL (East Yosemite League). We just have to finish a little more strong. It also comes to winning in playoffs, because especially in Tulare, winning the Bell game is everything. After that game we have to remember that there's another game to play and that the season doesn't end with the Bell game."

Some of Rocha's standouts this season, including senior wide receiver Jesse Macias, and senior linebacker/fullback Elijah Alonzo, are looking to improve from their previous two seasons and to get a little further into the playoffs.

"We're a work in progress as a team right now, we're a young team, but we're getting better. We want to get that first playoff win," said Alonzo.

Macias talked about some of the mistakes the team made in its Week One loss to Mt. Whitney, and that the team needs to tighten some things up on the field.

"We need to fix mistakes, and cut down on giving up the big plays," he said. "We need more leaders on this too. We have a lot of people that want to be leaders, but they're not vocal."

Tulare Western Mustang Football, Varsity, 2015. Photo courtesy Tulare Western High School.

There is one big aspect of the game that Rocha would love to carry over from last year's team and is something he hasn't seen yet with this year's team, and that is being ready to have your number called.

"If someone goes down, we need to have the next man up," he said. "They need to be ready to play with enthusiasm, and just continue to play. We lost a lot of athletes off of last year's team, and these guys have the ability, they just haven't proved it. They'll eventually catch on."

In order for his team to get the place he wants them to go, Rocha tries to impress on his team important and some of them simple tasks to becoming successful. "I want to see toughness; mental toughness and physical toughness," Rocha said. "They need to be able to fix boo-boos on the field. Make the right decisions and be smart about injuries, but also be able to fight through injuries."

"They need to stop being so wide eyed," he continued. "They're gaining experiences through all of this. They need to take advantage. "

Rocha said he would really like to see his team get more excited during games, and enjoy the good plays they make during games.

"They need to take away the individual aspect and celebrate fourth-down stops," he said. "All 50 players need to be involved."

Through their first two games the Mustangs stand at 1-1 after defeating Golden West High School on Friday, September 11. Their next game will take place on Thursday, September 17 at the Hanford Bowl against Hanford West High School. Game time is at 7:30pm.

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# Porterville Parks & Leisure To Host NFL Punt, Pass, Kick Competition

Young pro football fans will have the opportunity to exhibit their football skills when Porterville Parks and Leisure hosts a NFL Punt, Pass & Kick competition on Saturday, September 19 at the Porterville Sports Complex. The competition is free and open to boys and girls ages 6-15.

There is a place for everyone with five separate age divisions for girls and boys. Participants get one punt, one pass and one kick. Scores are based on distance and accuracy. Top finishers will advance to the Sectional Round with a chance to make it all the way to the National Finals. All participants will receive a certificate from the NFL signed by Commissioner Roger Goodell. Prizes for age group winners include ribbons, medals, awards, trophies and a trip for the competitor and one adult to the National Finals.

There is no registration fee or purchase required for any participant to enter.

The local competition will take place inside the Sports Complex at 2701 W. Scranton Ave. Registration begins at 9:30am and participants can compete anytime between 10am- 12pm

For more information on the Punt, Pass & Kick program visit www.nflppk.com. For more information about the local competition contact Parks and Leisure Services at (559) 791-7695 or check out the City of Porterville website, http://www.ci.porterville.ca.us/depts/ParksandLeisure/

# Fair

Continued from p. 17

includes the new Great American Duck Races, with live ducks and the chance to learn more about mallards. Also new is Wild Science, offering hands-on entertaining ways to learn more about science and technology, along with the Chinese Acrobats of Hebei, a display of incredible acrobatics, stunning costumes and beautiful music.

Mindworks! is a collection of puzzles, giant games, brain teasers, a construction zone and a toddler area where fair-goers can have fun while learning. Dozens of interactive displays/stations offer a variety of challenges and experiences, including the bubble arena, a LEGO wall, a Rube Goldberg Wall (with tracks, catapults, gears and baskets) and a giant chess game.

Let's Pretend Circus, presented multiple times daily, allows children to become tightrope walkers, wild animals, an animal trainer or a clown for a live theater experience designed to build confidence and creativity.

Something Ridiculous is a high-energy juggling and acrobatic act. The comic duo climbs up a freestanding ladder, onto a 10-foot-tall unicycle or atop each other's shoulders in an entertaining and dynamic show.

Walk on the Wild Side is an exhibit of displaced exotic animals that were given a home by a nonprofit animal refuge in Oregon. The exhibit pairs education about exotic animals with lessons on responsible animal ownership and awareness of the huge diversity of animal life.

Puppets and Players Little Theater will present Puff the Magic Dragon, which includes a daring duel onboard a pirate ship, a fearful storm at sea and travel to the bottom of the ocean. The show will be offered daily.

Great American Petting Zoo allows children to pet and enjoy a wide variety of friendly, hand-raised animals including llamas, fallow deer, Bennett wallabies, African pygmy goats, Vietnamese potbelly pigs, miniature Sicilian donkeys, call ducks and bantam chickens, among others.

Jest in Time Family Fun Stage is Topper Todd and Li Li Zucchini, two physical comedians and jugglers who perform stage shows and circus acts for the whole family.

Hypnotist Steve Bayner will perform nightly on the Budweiser stage.

Vintage America is a museum-quality, interactive 1950's vintage exhibit. It includes a fully restored, 20-foot vintage Airstream trailer full of vintage things and pulled by a 1956 Country Squire station wagon.

Chef Dianne Linderman offers cooking demonstrations throughout the five days of the fair.

Admission is $8 for adults; $5 for children ages 6-12. Seniors 62 and older are admitted for $6 on Senior Day, Thursday, September 17, from 11am to 2 pm, sponsored by Humana. Military Appreciation Day is also Thursday, with $6 admission for active duty military with ID card, from 11am to 2pm. The fair will also offer live local entertainers, the annual Heifer Replacement Sale and Junior Livestock Auction, new food booths, the Demolition Derby, a tractor pull, fun rides and more. Visit www.tcfair.org for ongoing updates to the schedule of events.